

Common Ground

Your Million Fathers Lyle Owen

THE NISEI SPEAK Carey McWilliams

CANTATA: MIXED VOICES Sid Schumann

GROWING NEW ROOTS Clare Leighton

JIM CROW IN THE CLASSROOM Marie Syrkin

YES, YOUR HONESTY

George and Helen Papashvily

SOUTHERN OFFENSIVE Guy B. Johnson

FIGHTING TOGETHER Sergeant Ben Kuroki

— *and others* —

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S U M M E R 1944

The story behind a great American novel!

The most spectacularly successful novel and one of the most highly praised books of the year was written in her middle years by a woman who had never before attempted full-length fiction. This startling fact becomes easy to understand when one knows something about Lillian Smith and her lifelong activities.

Miss Smith is the daughter of a well known, deeply respected Southern family. Many of her earliest and dearest memories are of the free companionship she shared with Negro children, memories clouded by the bitter knowledge that this happy friendship couldn't continue. Unlike most Southerners, she determined to learn why a division between the races had been forced upon her and, understanding the reasons, she resolved to do something about it.

She did. Through the medium of her own voice and pen; from lecture platforms; in countless living rooms; in the pages of many publications and, finally, in those of her own magazine, *South Today*, she has fought to give reality to the simple anthropological fact—to the basic American doctrine—that all men are created equal as human beings. In *Strange Fruit* this reality is given creative, artistic expression. It is clear to any intelligent reader that this remarkable novel could not have been contrived or manufactured, but had to grow as a

major experience of its writer's lifetime.

Because Miss Smith knows how much of the South's racial problems are inherent in the relationships between white and white, much of her books deals with the conflicts among and within the families of "white town." To many readers, for instance, the situation involving Tracy Dean, his sister and his mother, is as important and revealing as that other situation which arises when Tracy meets Nonnie and picks his perilous way across the tracks into "colored town."

That this book should have been so enthusiastically received throughout America has been deeply gratifying to its author and its publisher. Especially rewarding has been the enthusiasm of the South for the work of one who is warmly respected there.

To show how the American people, as a whole, reacts to a true work of art, we give you these sales figures in the belief that all of literate America may take pride in them: almost 20,000 copies were sold before publication; 6,000 were sold in the first week; 7,000 the second week; 17,000 the third week; 19,000 the fourth week; 18,000 the fifth week; 18,000 the sixth week; 22,000 the seventh week, and 19,000 the eighth week. 225,000 copies are now in print and more have been ordered.

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STRANGE FRUIT

by LILLIAN SMITH

Reynal & Hitchcock, New York

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YOUR MILLION FATHERS

LYLE OWEN

EVERY individual knows that his ancestors must have been numerous, and that they must have varied in physical and mental type. Thoughtful individuals realize further that everyone's racial makeup must be extremely complex—that, as to this aspect of our heredity, each of us is probably almost everything. Few, however, have conceived this multitudinous ancestry concretely enough to make its size and complexity vivid.

It seems to be the custom for everyone to have two parents, and for them to have had two parents each—which means four grandparents for the one counting. Procedure along this line builds up a column like the following:

At only ten generations back, then, the number of one's ancestors in that one generation—not including the whole pyramid of people between—passes the thousand line. Ten generations may seem like a long time, but it is only about 300 years. Experience shows that the average length of a generation in the present sense, which is from the birth of the median child in a family to the birth of his median child, is around 30 years. Thus at about the time of the arrival of the *Mayflower*, each of us had more than a thousand living ancestors, if we assume no intermarriage of kin between then and now.

As history goes, let alone the half-million years or more of prehistory during

NUMBER OF YOUR ANCESTORS IN A GIVEN GENERATION

	1	You
1st generation back	2	Your parents
2nd " "	4	" grandparents
3rd " "	8	" great-grandparents
4th " "	16	" great-great-grandparents
5th " "	32	
6th " "	64	
7th " "	128	
8th " "	256	
9th " "	512	
10th " "	1,024	

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which man wandered and mated, the period since the settlement of Plymouth is but a sliver of time. And if a few more generations are calculated, the number of a man's possible ancestors becomes even more astonishing:

is that we are largely related, and frequently much more closely than we realize. Your grandparents were mine.

If the geometric progression is pushed a few steps further toward our origin, only 30 generations—or about 900 years—are

POSSIBLE NUMBER OF YOUR ANCESTORS IN A GIVEN GENERATION

11th generation back		2,048	Your great-great-great-great-great-great-grandparents
12th	"	4,096	
13th	"	8,192	
14th	"	16,384	
15th	"	32,768	
16th	"	65,536	
17th	"	131,072	
18th	"	262,144	
19th	"	524,288	
20th	"	1,048,576	

Twenty generations behind you, the number unknowingly contributing to your ultimate arrival passes the million mark. Yet that is only 600 years, but little fatter as a sliver of time than the 300 years of our first calculation. Twenty ancestral steps take us back only to Chaucer (1340?-1400) and Wycliffe (?-1384), to a mere century before the invention of printing. In 20 generations we are back to the time of Boccaccio (1313-1375) and the Black Death (1348). The Hundred Years' War had just started (1337), and our forebears of only 17 generations ago were contemporaries of Joan of Arc (1412-1431), the heroine of the late phases of that war. And it is only 15 generations back to the discovery of America.

If each of us had a million grandparents only 600 years ago, one wonders how there were enough of them to go round. After all, the ancestry of not just you and me is to be explained, but of all the two billions of people who now live, love, work, and war in this world. The answer, of course,

needed to make the theoretical number of the then existing forebears of each of us pass the billion line. But a billion is more than the whole population of the world at that time, the 11th century. Since it is obvious that no one could have had so many ancestors then, it becomes equally obvious that between then and now there must have been many marriages between relatives. Sometimes the fact they they were kin was known to the nuptial pair; more often the relationship was unknown, because more remote.

What conclusions flow from this analysis? Certainly one must be that our ancestors are bewilderingly numerous. A second is that they would have been even more bewilderingly so if there had not been widespread intermarriage of blood relatives among them. A third and corollary conclusion is that we are today all more or less cousins, near or remote. I often wonder, when glancing at some new face, when and in what land there was a connection between us. Was it Shake-

speare's time, or Caesar's? Or was it only in Washington's age that this person and I had a common progenitor? Almost certainly, somewhere there was a connection. The mathematical probabilities show that. We may not all be brothers, but we are the next thing to it.

Of course this conclusion is most obvious for the people within any one of the great "races" or divisions of men, such as the whites, where contact has been more common and where social and legal barriers to group interbreeding have been fewer. There is much greater chance that an Englishman is related to a German or a Frenchman whom he may meet at random than that he is related to a Chinese. But if we examine the probabilities once more, and also review the migrations of man, we begin to suspect that we are all related, regardless of race or color, and regardless of the perhaps diverse origins of man. If the Garden of Eden hypothesis be accepted, then of course we are all related through descent from two common progenitors. As a matter of fact, according to the Bible, the common descent of all of us, color differences notwithstanding, need be traced no further back than Noah. Anthropology seems to indicate that nature produced various experimental men or near men. Some lines of them, like *Pithecanthropus erectus* or even more definitely human types, became extinct, and others survived to result at last in you and me. While, therefore, it is possible that all existing human beings did not spring from a single biological mutation (the first "man")—in other words, while it is possible that man originated independently in a number of places and/or times, the wanderings and contacts of our kind have nevertheless been so great in the intervening ages that we are probably all related, at least in minute degree, somewhere between here and our origin, even if not at the origin.

It begins to look, then, as if racially we are all everything. This generalization is of course not literally true, but it approaches the truth. Those of us of the European white stock, which comprises the bulk of the population of the United States, thus not only possess Teutonic, Celtic, and other Indo-European genes, but in all probability small amounts not only of other white strains, like the Semitic, but of the other colors as well. In most cases the amounts of the yellow and black are minute; nevertheless their presence is likely.

The fact that one knows of no Mongolian blood in his veins does not prove its absence. Who really knows what he is, or whence he came? When we go back only a few of mankind's many centuries, the carefully kept lineage even of kings becomes obscure. Some of us can trace our pedigree back to the Norman Conquest or beyond, but what does such a pedigree mean? Usually it means the name line only. The study of one's ancestry is interesting, and there is no intention of implying here that it is unimportant. Rather the thought is, that whatever the main stream may be, it has been greatly diluted.

When one assumes noble qualities in himself because of demonstrated or reputed noble qualities in an 11th-century forebear, he is forgetting that at that time, only about 29 generations back, his theoretical number of ancestors was half a billion. Although the real number of his ancestors was not that large, it was most likely astonishing.

The conclusion toward which the mathematical probabilities point—that racially we are all mongrels—is reinforced by case studies of the wandering and wifing of mankind. America, where trickles or floods from every land have converged, is becoming the world's best example of a

mongrel nation. And a few more generations will see the mixture much more thorough, for many families have been here too short a time to marry outside their group.

But even if we turn to the more stable populations of those older countries whence American stock came, we find a long history of military and commercial wanderings and resultant mixing. Many of us trace our ancestry to the British Isles. But what are the British people, or what, for that matter, is an Englishman? Even supposing that the line of the earliest humans or near-humans of that area became extinct, from Piltdown man to those last preceding the postglacial neolithic inhabitants, and that we are nowise descended from them, our British ancestry is still exceedingly mixed. For assuredly, to begin with, the neolithic inhabitants, thought to be Iberians, were among our ancestors. The Iberians were also among the many ancestors of the modern Spanish and Portuguese; thus it is likely that we of English descent are related to the present people of those lands, and through them to many a part-Spaniard and part-Portuguese in faraway places like Latin America and the Philippines. When the Celtic Goidels and Brythons came to England from the Continent, as was the custom of conquerors they slaughtered some of the Iberians and whatever residues of older stocks there were then surviving, pushed others back into the wilder, more remote, and more rugged parts of the islands, and still managed to do a deal of breeding with them.

The Phoenicians were early comers, too. These Semitic traders from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean established many trading posts, some as far away as Cadiz on the Atlantic shores of Spain. In their exploring and their commerce they pushed as far as the tin deposits of Cornwall in southwestern England. While they

were not populous colonizers at that distance, they doubtless left some genetic impress on the island.

When we realize that throughout history and doubtless throughout prehistory, commercial or military contact between peoples almost certainly led to interbreeding (whether dignified by the name of marriage or not), we begin to grasp the truth that racially each of us is probably everything. Of course the components of which we are formed come in considerably different proportions, and that is why we can still contrast a Nordic with a Mediterranean type, or still more easily, the white and the black. None the less, each of these has at least a little of the other in its veins.

The Romans first came to Britain on a punitive expedition under Julius Caesar, in 55 and again 54 B.C. They came to stay—or so they thought—in 43 A.D., and remained nearly four centuries. Though troubles at Rome, and on the Continent generally, caused the final withdrawal of the Roman legions around 407 A.D., can anyone believe that in a stay of 400 years they left none of their genes in England? It is true that the Teutonic Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, who were Britain's next invaders, destroyed many people as well as most of the works of the Romans, and that they pushed the living back into the remoter parts of the islands, but none the less a mixture of all that had gone before remained for the newcomers in turn to mate with.

The Roman occupation meant that our Englishman came to have some of the Etruscan, Greek, and other bloods of the ancient Italian peninsula, as well as what we call Roman (or Italic) blood itself. And for the same reason, that of miscegenation before their arrival, the Germanic Angles, Saxons, and Jutes did not bring an unmixed heritage to Britain.

The Danish invasions of England began

about 789 A.D., and for nearly three centuries there were first raids and then settlements of Northmen of various varieties. In 1066 occurred the last great military invasion, that of the Normans. But they in turn had for some time been dwellers in France, and had not only absorbed much of its language and culture but some of its women as well.

Since the time of the Romans there have been Jewish travelers and settlers in Britain as almost everywhere else. In spite of their supposed exclusion for three and a half centuries, from the time of their expulsion by Edward I (1290 A.D.) until their re-admission by Cromwell, and in spite of mutual opposition to intermarriage, enough has taken place that large numbers of those of English extraction who do not suspect its presence must have a tincture of Semitic blood. And, if traced far enough back, the ancestry brought by, we will say, a Portuguese Jew settling in England would include touches of Asia, Africa, and Europe, and in time all this would be contributed to the stock we call English—or American.

The impress on the British of this race of relatively few people may seem trifling, but it must be remembered that geometric progression also does amazing things when worked the other direction from the way we have here used it, as Malthus and his followers have vividly shown. This fact may be illustrated from another contribution to the British stock of even smaller size. Some Spanish survivors of the battered and wrecked Armada landed on the shores of Ireland in 1588, where most were probably massacred. From the Armada to now is a mere 12 generations, but if only one half-drowned Spaniard had survived and, with the co-operation of his Irish bride had had but two children, and if each of those had had the un-Irish number of two offspring, and so on down to the present, there would now be (assum-

ing no intermarriage of blood relatives in the meantime) 4096 little Irishmen with a touch, among most of the other strains of mankind, of the Invincible Armada in them.

There were others who sought refuge or profit in England. As early as the reign of William the Conqueror (1066-1087), some weavers from Flanders settled in England, and other English monarchs, especially Edward III (reigned 1327-1377), encouraged the coming of additional Flemish clothmakers. The French persecutions of Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries, particularly after Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, drove thousands of Huguenots to safer lands, including Britain and America.

Many other illustrations are needed to complete the picture. Apparently part of the same Indo-European stock, through which come most of the Englishman's genes, also went to India and in the course of centuries filtered south in that great peninsula, diluting darker aboriginal blood as it went. Hence when the Englishman goes to India he is meeting his own relatives—separated by much time and other mixing on both sides, it is true, but none the less his kin.

During the Crusades of the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries, the English and others from western Europe doubtless left traces of their prowess in love as well as in warfare all the way across Europe, Asia Minor, and the Near East—from home to the Saracens and back. And the various Semitic peoples we have mentioned (the Phoenicians, Jews, and Arabs or Saracens) with whom the English have on occasion mingled, have themselves had traces or more of other Asiatic and African stocks.

Numerous invasions of Europe, particularly from its Asiatic side, have occurred in addition to the coming of the Indo-Europeans themselves. The Huns, for instance, got as far as northeast France in

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451 A.D., and the Moors to western France in 732 A.D. Both were defeated and withdrew, but farther back they influenced the racial makeup of Europeans who in turn contributed to present British and especially to American blood. Indeed, if we had chosen to illustrate the mingling of our ancestors in a land less peripheral than England was before the discovery of America, the mixing process might be even more obvious. But through the British Isles the heredity of much of the nascent American race has been funneled; hence they were chosen for illustration.

We could go back even to the time of the prehistoric but not prehuman land bridges between Africa and Europe, the one through Tunisia, Sicily, and Italy, the other through Gibraltar, and wonder how much wandering and mixture between the peoples of the two continents there was then. The remains of Grimaldi man, found in caves near the junction of France and Italy, are said to exhibit Negroid characteristics. And the Iberian people, with whom we started the strange tale of British ancestry, are believed to have come to western Europe from Africa. The Iberians may seem so remote that their contribution is trifling, yet it is less than 100 generations back to the time when these neolithic parents of ours controlled the land from Spain to Britain.

Both of the logical methods we have

here employed cast the same doubt on racial purity: the deductive—reasoning about a man's ancestry from the mathematical probabilities; and the inductive—piecing together the historical facts for a particular people. Both methods likewise cast doubt on the race superiority doctrine, whether it be the Nazi or the Ku Klux variety. And, if it is true, as science and religion both indicate, that all men are brothers, why not behave as brothers should?

Would that one could stand on a reviewing platform and see his forebears pass by! (The human ones, at any rate, we should summon; the jellyfish, the reptiles, and the others might be excused.) What an amazing number it would be, and what a diversity! Many a hue and land would be represented; many a talent or lack of it would be there. If anyone could look at that parade and conclude that the stock he represents is either pure or clearly superior, it might be well to toss him back to the foot of the line and let him start the million-year march anew.

A Missourian currently seeking election to the Missouri State Legislature, Lyle Owen has taught economics and government at the University of Wisconsin, the Southwest Missouri State Teachers College, and the Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh.

CANTATA: MIXED VOICES

SID SCHUMANN

I was maintenance man those days. And I used to watch this guy stoopin' over the table, workin'.

He was Austrian. When the Nazis took over his country in '38, they found his wife had 25 per cent the wrong kinda blood. Later on they found he had the wrong kinda ideas. Anyway, his wife died that year. The baby she was gonna have died with her. That's all I knew about him. The girl in personnel said he got to us under some special permit.

He was steady, never had much to say. He sat with a piece of gauze over his nose, huggin' the spark-proof bowl where he mixed tetryl, like it was a cake batter he was nursin'. When the stuff left him, they made cookies out of it and then fuzed it to the T.N.T. for the 37mm shells. He worked graveyard, same as me.

This is out Pedro. Used to be a small-arms plant: bullets for the huntin' crowd, police cartridges, and pineapples for gangsters. Three months after Pearl Harbor we're hirin' up to a thousand. Instead a forgin' little shells we're fillin' big ones. Bomb casings besides—from a grenade to a blockbuster.

Things aren't so hot, to start with. We're short a safety devices and half the plant is gettin' laid up with nitrate sores, or they're keelin' over from the fumes. It's bad too that we get a lotta guys don't know a beebie from a semi-automatic. Besides which they're from all over. They don't get the hang of how to get along: "Hey Arkie, tell Okie Tex is arrived," or "Send down Nigger Joe." Stuff like that.

In a way it wasn't their fault. We got so big and busy we hadn't the time for no committee to tell 'em we're in a war and to forget a guy's skin. A lotta other plants are in the same fix. They got contracts faster'n they can chew 'em. I still can't figure out how we weren't blown to pieces those days.

That's the way things stood when one night, close to 3 a.m.—zingo! We hear a batty woman screamin' way up in the sky. It's the air-raid siren, comin' from the fire-station quarter mile away.

The plant's just one story, spread over an acre. The blackout and camouflage was started but hadn't yet been finished. We stop the machinery, douse all but one tube light in the center, and we're hangin' around tryin' to think up wisecracks. It's got quiet's a mausoleum and we're not makin' the wisecracks. We're scared stiff.

Close to me is Gladys Murphy, a little spitfire who is now workin' with smokeless powder. I'm kinda sweet on the dame but so far's she's concerned, I'm just another Presbyterian. Then there's a colored cleanup man, name a Roland, and that giant Lozovsky who has charge of the howitzer shells.

I hear someone askin' us, very polite, "My name is Lothar. You will excuse," the voice says. "I am trying a glee club to organize. Do you, gentlemen and ladies, would you like to join, to sing sometimes a little?"

You can't appreciate this unless you've worked ordnance. Over on the left there's a pile of detonators filled with fulminate.

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Further down there's about a million tetryl boosters ready to be fuzed. A hundred yards away we had an underground magazine filled to the gills with the meanest explosives this side a Kingdom Come. If those are enemy planes we're hearin' above and they do happen to lay an egg or two, the entire shebang would end up nothin' but one big hole in the ground. You'd be doin' good if you could collect the remains with a sifter. And here's a guy with a German accent, in the dark—askin' do we wanna sing!

I turn around and it's this quiet Austrian guy who mixes tetryl next to the lacquer room. And he don't look nuts. "I have spoken to Mr. Sanders," he goes on. "He is permitting to organize a group. We are going to have the auditions next Friday in Stockroom C," he says. "I would like to listen to your voices."

Gladys pipes up, "I used to sing. Used to sing nightclub once."

"Vot kind voices you vant, Mr. Lotha?" Lozovsky asks.

"Every kind. I will need about thirty."

"I will be dere," answers Lozovsky, and I'm listenin' to what kind of voice he was gonna have. Gladys and Roland seem to like the idea, too.

"Thank you," the Lothar guy says, "I hope all of you to see." And with that, the all-clear sounds, the lights go on, the big hoists start movin' and we're in business again.

Maintenance keeps a fella hoppin'. We're gettin' more a them 37s. It's a sweet shell you could use tank, anti-tank, off the ground, and in the air. We called 'em "Little Poison" and we coulda never taken North Africa without 'em. Naturally I'd clean forgot about this here glee club business except Gladys passes some remark the night before and I decided to try out, too. I'd tried my voice and it wasn't bad, not bad at all. I hadn't sung

since I was a kid and it broke right in the middle of a hallelujah. But I didn't think many guys'd show up and I felt kinda sorry for Lothar.

I came early the next afternoon and so did my pals who Lothar talked to durin' the blackout. We're up front and you coulda knocked me over with a firing-pin when I see the line formin' behind me. Old man Sanders musta helped Lothar spread the word. I knew he was worried about production. But I didn't know he was that worried. There was everybody on that line from powder weighers to gun-mount inspectors. If there's any department not represented, it musta been a secret weapon.

The thirty voices is picked and, believe it or not, I'm in. Lothar musta had a soft spot for all of us because my buddies are in, too. It makes it nice Gladys is with us.

Stockroom C bein' filled with these new steel shells, Lothar decided to run the rehearsals in his own house.

It's a peculiar place and crowded on account of the folding chairs he set up. We're waitin' for Lothar to come from his other room and we're admirin' the view outside. There's a midget piano against the wall and a bookcase filled with German books and sheet music. On the walls there's pictures of guys with beards and old-fashioned hair and in the center there's one big one looks like God. When I get close, I see the name is Walt Whitman.

There's a photograph on the piano of a young girl with the prettiest braids I ever saw, and there's a flower inside pressed against the frame. I remembered about Lothar's wife and then I see Lothar behind me, lookin' at the picture, too. "That was my wife, my Paula. She was still in the university."

We had about four rehearsals at Lothar's and we thought we were goin' strong. But Lothar didn't seem pleased.

"My friends," he says, "I wish very much you would not try so hard to tickle the customers." He went to the piano and sat down and his hands come up to explain. "This is a cantata and it is called 'Come, All Ye Brothers.' The words are from a poem by Walt Whitman. That means you have to forget the 'hotcha,' the



'Night and Day' stuff, the Puccini. You must remember also that you are not in church." And as he's talkin', I'm lookin' at that picture of his dead wife, on the piano.

"In the factory you are producing something to save a world. You must have that same truth in your voice. Please try to understand this. We do not sing this into the clouds—we do not attempt to sing it into the saloons," Lothar went on, getting up and taking up his stick again. "To the people we sing this, who eat and sleep and fight with machine-guns and laugh and cry and become betrothed. And who sometimes get lectures from foremen. And remember while you sing that, if you lose the war, you will never sing again. Now—let us try again. And please do not try to tickle the customers. With this music it

is not needed. With Walt Whitman's voice it is not necessary."

The thing went on like a Roman candle, but after the seventh or eighth rehearsal it began to fizzle. It started to fizzle without our bein' able to put our finger on just why. Of course we lost singers when they got these fume rashes, or were laid up. Now and then a singer would get bad news from overseas, and they didn't show up for awhile. We had Ed Torney who was from Texas, and he was always arguin' about havin' to sing in the same baritone section with Roland. And then we got a rush order for those new combination grenade-shells. We were so tired we could hardly whisper, let alone sing. From thirty singers we got down to nine. Lozovsky was the only one left in the basses and Lothar was so discouraged it even showed in his work. The entire idea might've folded up if something hadn't happened, which, when it did, gave us an awful jolt.

Lothar's mixer wasn't far from the lacquer room. Now all shells have to be painted inside and out. We'd been workin' some lend-lease stuff for the British, and it called for some kind a varnish for the inside of their shells. We didn't like the stuff but we had to use it. We started with small batches, and we had a girl sprayin' the shells inside that lacquer room.

I'm oilin' a conveyer the other end a the plant when I hear a commotion. I stand up and there's that lacquer room and a blaze comin' out of it that's sickenin' to look at. First it's comin' out bright yellow and then clouds a black smoke.

The fire-bell goes off. We take our stations as the shift starts marchin' out, and I see the fire-crew with extinguishers runnin' for the room. At the same time, Lothar turns off his mixer, quick fastens a cover over the bowl, and starts runnin' to

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the safety crew. The smoke's gettin' worse all the time, and now I'm really waitin' for somethin' to pop. People are beginnin' to yell all over the place.

When the crew gets to the room, the blaze is gettin' yellow again and it stops 'em dead. It's the first fire we ever had, and for a minute they couldn't figure what to do. Lothar is runnin' up. "There's a girl inside," he yells. "There is somebody inside—what are you waiting!" And with that he covers his face with a fresh mask, snatches an extinguisher from the crew, and goes inside. The crew follows, pumpin' like mad. A foreman comes runnin' past me and yells for me to follow.

Inside, the fire is all around us. The smoke is so dense we can't hardly breathe. Lothar is ahead, tryin' to keep the flames from hittin' the girl, who's passed out on the floor. When he sees it's no use, he

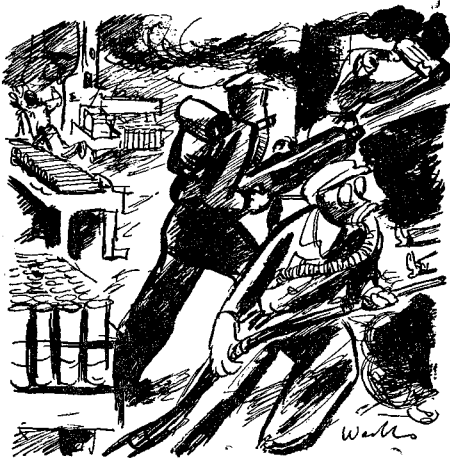
hole made a terrific draft but by this time the crew had managed to keep the flames down. They had the fire out pretty quick after that.

Lothar and the girl had gashes all over them from the glass. The girl had her coveralls practically burned off, and part of her hair. But she was back on the job, almost good's new inside a week. Lothar came back the next day, his leg stiff from some stitches, and his arm bandage covering a second-degree burn. We almost had a riot when he showed up—there was such a commotion—and then they had this piece in the ordnance magazine some of us got: "TETRYL WORKER SAVES LIFE," "QUICK THINKING AT PEDRO ARMS." And that's how we got the chorus back.

In fact, Lothar coulda had two hundred voices if he'd a wanted. Popular wasn't the word. Of course they didn't all understand this cantata business. Some a them thought he was slightly bugs, but they didn't mind.

We had a couple a more rehearsals, and let me tell you whatever this here bel canto was—we had it. Why, when they gave that oratorio in the Civic Hall, the singers sounded amateurs compared to us. That Lothar would make you sing a line a thousand times, but it had to be just the way he wanted it. And whenever we'd get tired, he treat us to a sip of old-fashioned wine he had in his place. Then he'd tell us some more about Walt Whitman. Most a the singers began to know Walt Whitman wasn't the name of a shortstop or somethin'.

Roland, the colored cleanup man, is in charge of all the parts now—librarian. Gladys is prompter and Lozovsky is choir-master, and we're all singin' like a house afire. We're gettin' so good that part of the day shift is always droppin' in to Lothar's to hear us. And Lothar is gettin' fat over it. I never see a guy so pleased.



shuts off the spray tank, lifts it up, and heaves it through the shatter-proof glass wall. The tank musta been almost empty, but how he found the strength to pick it up and throw it through the glass wall I'll never know. The hole he made was just big enough for him to pull the girl through. When he got her out, he stretched her over the lawn outside. The

"This morning," Lothar tells the group, "this morning, Mr. Sanders told me we might have a concert right in the factory."

Gladys looks up. "Concert?"

"Yes, he said if production got better, he would even send us to Carnegie Hall. That," Lothar smiles, "is only an idea, but—"

"—Car-naigie Hall," Roland says, kinda slow.

Gladys giggles. "From B-girl to Bach!"

"For the bel canto," Lozovsky says, "is better the Metropolitan."

And so it got to be two or three singers would ask after every rehearsal, "My-stro, do you think we're ready?" And when they got Lothar to tell 'em they only needed one more going over, the fun began.

A shell inspector thought we ought to have a platform built near Exit 1. Lozovsky boomed out that it had to be in front of the building. "Dere can be no udder blace," he said. Mamie, who worked small stuff at the loading machine, thought it would be nice to have the platform draped with bunting and that all the singers should dress. Gladys agrees but Lothar says no. It's wartime. No pink dresses and no bow ties. Just clean overalls and slacks. The baritones began to pester for a date again, and the basses asked Roland could he get in touch with the newspapers. Ed Torney, the Texas baritone, asked Roland about having a loudspeaker.

Lothar finally quieted them down. "I will talk to Mr. Sanders," he said. "On Friday next, I will have the final instructions. Remember your parts—and please do not get sick." And the following week we had that last rehearsal.

It was rainin' that day and with my cold I couldn't sing. But I came to listen and to watch Lothar. It was more crowded than ever because, besides an audience from the plant, there's Mr. and Mrs. Murphy, who've come to listen to Gladys;

Sonya Lozovsky is there to hear her husband; and there's a couple a more relatives of the singers standin' around. How they all fit into that room was a wonder. Lothar came out and as I'm lookin' at him I could see he's been worryin' about somethin'. He stood on a little box in front of the group and looked at 'em for several minutes. Everyone's gettin' restless and wonderin' what's the matter. Finally he raps on a chair with his stick. "Come, All Ye Brothers" starts goin'. In a way I'm glad I can hear it without havin' to sing.

The sopranos are singin' low and the tune is travelin' fresh as a breeze against young trees that are bein' bent by it. And then Gladys stood up for the opening solo. Her voice shook a little:

*"Turn from lands retrospective, re-
cording proofs of the past;
From the chants of the feudal world—
the triumph of kings, slavery,
caste; . . ."*

And now the whole chorus comes in like it's embroiderin' Gladys' song and it's swellin' in and out and under her voice. And then the group sings soft, like they're in a tiptoe:

*"To the drum-taps prompt,
The young men falling in and arming;
The mechanics arming, the lawyers,
drivers, salesmen . . ."*

And under it there's like little snatches of brown sound, the hummin' of the basses, led by Lozovsky. He comes into his recit'avo easy like, and then it gets strong's a bull until it's like almost a bellow from that powerful singin' chest of his.

I can see the lips of the Murphys are movin' and their eyes are closed. Sonya Lozovsky is watchin' her husband and she's twistin' a handkerchief.

The baritones are comin' in strong now. You can hear Texas Ed Torney and Roland's voices leadin' 'em. And then all

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the voices join in for the finale and they're gettin' stronger all the time like they're tryin' to drown out Lozovsky, but they can't quite do it and they start to die down and Lozovsky with 'em. Their melody keeps on dyin' with his, and Roland's and Texas Ed's and they stay that way until you can't tell if you're listenin' to voices or an echo. Lothar bends over them with his stick like he's tryin' to choke their cry, so's it'll stay hummin' forever. The echoes die out. Lothar puts his stick down. The thing is over.

Everybody is still. Mrs. Murphy's eyes are shinin'. "My," she says, "my—it is, it's beautiful!" and she starts applaudin' and, as she does, everybody looks at her, like they're still in a trance and she stops, kind of awkward; her hands drop to her side and she starts pressin' Mr. Murphy to her.

Roland asks, "Mr. Lothar, how was it?"

Lothar stands quiet, then he nods deep, and slow. "You can be very proud—you can be very proud."

The Murphys stood around Gladys. Sonya puts her arms around Lozovsky. Roland and Texas Ed shake hands and Lozovsky's voice booms. "The concert, Mr. Lotha—ven is it to be?"

Lothar looks at the singers. "I have some news for you," he begins and I can see his eyes goin' down and the stick he's holdin' goin' round and round between his fingers, and then he looks up, and adds, "It is not good."

Gladys leaves the Murphys. Lozovsky turns from Sonya. Roland pauses collectin' the parts. They all gather around Lothar like they was fresh sailors facin' their first storm.

"Mr. Sanders had some fine ideas," said Lothar. "I think he knew more than only management. Mr. Sanders is no longer at the factory." The singers looked like they'd been struck. Lothar's stick began to go round between his fingers again. "I have done what I could. Yesterday I spent

an hour with the new man. I was talking Greek. He finally said to me that they were doing something for the entertainment of employees. Yes." Everybody in the room's listenin' hard.

Lothar goes on, his voice quieter. "They are going to install an instrument near the steam-table of the lunchroom. It is imitation marble, imitation walnut, and sounds will come out through the imitation fabric over the front panel. Probably it will have many colors, and electric lights will flash. While you eat hamburgers, you will be able to insert a nickel. A piece of culture will fall out!"

"A jukebox!" cries Gladys. And everybody breaks in talkin' all at once.

"An' me singin' an' singin' till my throat is as sore's a risin'!" says Texas Ed, and he turns to Roland. "Did y'ever hear such a thing?"

Roland sits lookin' at the rain outside the window. "I might've been upgraded by now. I missed the training just so's I could get this chance to sing."

Mamie, the loader, said maybe the union ought to know about this, and Roland didn't see where that would be any good. Every couple a minutes Lozovsky repeats, "Dere is only vun vord for all dis. Vun vord!" Then everybody starts talkin' together again. Lothar waits and then he taps for order.

"For two months you have been bringin' something fine into the world. And, also, you have learned to respect one another. Now it is your baby. It is no longer in my hands. It is your music, your chorus—your souls. If this dies, you will never be so happy again."

"Ve know vot ve have to do!" yelled Lozovsky. "Ve have to—"

"—get together a committee," Gladys puts in.

"Dat," says Lozovsky, swingin' his heavy face around to Gladys like he's ready for the first round, "dat—is correct!"

CANTATA: MIXED VOICES

Gladys is too upset to remember her lunch the next night so I make her share mine.

"Gladys," I says, "h'ow about you'n me goin' to a dance Sunday?"

"There's other things we got to do," she answers as she bites into my sandwich. "We're getting that committee together when we quit work in the morning. There'll be five of us, Mamie, Roland,

stops when he's in town. First he's in New York. Then it's Chicago. Then the hotel manager tells us he's gonna be in Washington for a month. After that they don't know where he's gonna be.

We're hangin' around the hotel lobby kinda down in the mouth. "Well, what do we do now?" asks Mamie. Gladys don't answer. Just bites her lips. And we keep standin' around like five lost sheep.



Lozovsky, you, and me. That takes care of all the voices."

"Who you gonna see?"

"Mr. Mangin."

"Mr. Who!"

"Mangin, Horace Mangin, the owner."

"But, Gladys, you'll never get to 'im."

She tosses her head. "No?—If you can get to the President, you can get to Mangin. He's only a man. He's got ears."

"I'm not goin'," I says. "You can get to the moon quicker'n you can get to Mangin. He's got three ordnance plants. He isn't gonna listen to no fight between a cantata and a jukebox. We'll be laughed at from one end of the plant to the other."

Gladys stands up and her lips are tremblin'. "After what Lothar did—for all of us!" She hands me the sandwich she's eatin'. "Go get yourself someone to dance with!" and she starts walkin' away.

I'll be darned if I didn't take up the whole lunch period to patch things up with her.

Three times we try to see Mr. Mangin at the Pedro Hotel where he generally

Roland says, "The men in the plant are all for this thing. Why can't we get them to sign—"

"Yes," butts in Lozovsky, "dot's vot ve need—"

"A petition!" puts in Mamie.

Gladys cocks her head at Roland, then at Lozovsky, then at Mamie. And a big smile comes out. "Children," she says, "you're so bright I could kiss you! That's exactly what we're gonna do!"

"Where you gonna send it?" I ask.

"I'll take care a that part." And back Gladys goes to that hotel manager.

"You got de address?" asks Lozovsky when she comes back.

"Sure I got it. Them clerks. Argued with me. 'Listen, bud,' I said to 'em. 'Either you give me Horace Mangin's forwardin' address or me and my gang'll park right here till Mangin gets here!'"

We still had a couple a hours to kill when we got back to the plant. So we take some coffee in the lunchroom. The new jukebox is settin' there. It ain't hooked up yet.

"Now," says Gladys, "we gotta organ-

ize this thing and organize fast. I got supplies from the office." And we all get to work rulin' off sheets a paper for the names, addresses, and departments. On top of each we write what we want Mangin to do.

"Who's gonna get the signatures?" asks Mamie.

"Mel!" Lozovsky taps himself on the chest.

"You'll have to make all three shifts. When you gonna sleep?" asks Gladys.

"Don't worry, Miss Morphy," he answers. "I will have dose signatures."

Three days later he hands Gladys all the papers signed to the gills. Lothar comes over while Gladys is countin' the sheets. "Ivan Lozovsky," she says, "we only got a thousand people workin' here. You got more than 1,500 names!"

Lozovsky looks like a kid caught with his fist in a jam-pot. "Miss Morphy—I—I had still empty papers so I vent to some udder fact'ries. Dey vus glad to sign."

"Dey vus glad to sign!" Gladys imitates, wild. "And now you went and spoiled everything!"

Lothar looks at the petitions. "I do not think we have to worry too much. They are, after all, workers. Let us send it."

Mamie thought we ought to put with it the magazine story about Lothar, but Lothar said no. "Mr. Mangin knows about it. He sent me a personal letter and a check. But this—" and he takes two bits of clipping from his wallet, then puts one back—"this, I think he will be interested in." He pins it to the petitions and puts them in the envelope we had ready and seals it.

"Vot vus it?" asks Lozovsky.

"When the time comes, I will tell you." And he gives the heavy envelope to Mamie to mail.

A week goes by and then two. The plant is gettin' as excited over this thing

as we are. But nothin' happens. And then when they hook up this jukebox, we're sure the cantata idea is washed up.

But the followin' Monday mornin' Lothar gets a call from the man who took old Sanders' place. We're all watchin' 'im go to the office. A couple a carbine inspectors are layin' bets and it seems like the whole plant is slowin' up to find out what's what with Lothar. Even the big hoists are movin' like snails and everyone who can get away is findin' an excuse to pass that office and watch for Lothar. And then Lothar comes out.

One look at his face and we know we're in. You should a heard the commotion.

Lozovsky goes over to Lothar later on. "Mr. Lotha," he says, "vun ting I vant to know. Vot vus de piece of paper you sent wit de names?"

And then Lothar takes out the other clipping from his wallet and passes it around to the "committee."

This is what it says:

"Lothar, Harold Franz; born Vienna, 1899; mother, daughter of Innsbruck minister; father, cement worker; graduated Leipzig Conservatory 1919; oratorios, quartets, cantata 'Come, All Ye Brothers' won first prize 1925; left post Vienna Opera, wounded Madrid 1937; arrested after 'Anschluss' in Austria where he had returned and married; wife died in prison camp; Lothar escaped winter 1938; present whereabouts unknown; said to be working in obscure factory in America."

"'Obscure factory!' says Gladys. "I like that!"

Well, we held that concert. In fact we had to repeat it for every shift. And when we hit Pry Magazine, the help really strutted like they owned the plant. They started fillin' shells almost as fast as they were turnin' 'em out. We got the Army "E" award twice in a row.

We had to sing that cantata in the

SOMETHING IN OUR WAYS

Civic Hall. The crowd was amazin', and to top it all there's Eleanor Roosevelt, smack in the front row. What a guy Lothar was! Everytime he was up there, leadin' us, I couldn't help thinkin' about how his wife shoulda been alive to see the way they carried on about her husband. It woulda been nice if she'd been there. But—that's the way things go.

Lothar? Oh—they couldn't keep a man like that in the factory. When Eleanor had 'im in "My Day," they had a government agency ask for him. They figured a man like that would be good for the Army to have.

Every now and then you read a piece about him. He goes from camp to camp teachin' the soldiers this cantata. I guess, in a way, he and Walt Whitman are doin' a pretty good job, teachin' the boys what the shootin's all about.

Gladys and I had 'im over for dinner just before he left. Yeah—we're married now. We got together right after that first concert.

But you know what was worryin' Lothar as he sat eatin' with us? He wanted to know did we get a good tettyl-mixer to replace 'im.

And I hadda admit it wasn't easy. That Lothar was one good mixer, never spilled a drop. It takes months to train a guy. But—you can't have everything. Now you take a grenade . . .

Sid Schumann is a free-lance writer of popular science articles, who likes best to do stories illustrating practical democracy. He writes, "I think it is an exhilarating coincidence that a New York composer, William Schuman (no relative) should have composed 'A Free Song, Secular Cantata No. 2 for Chorus and Orchestra. Adapted from poems by Walt Whitman.' I had no idea of its existence until I heard it some weeks ago at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium, just about six months after I had written 'Cantata'."

The illustrations are by Kurt Werth.

SOMETHING IN OUR WAYS

JUSTUS LANE

LET us rejoice that with all our faults and failings a newcomer to our land finds his heart filled with loyalty for America. The basis for loyalty to country is not always inspiring. Frequently such feeling rests only on long acquaintance—our people have lived here for generations; we have seen the sun rise over the same trees, year after year; we have turned the same corners, gone into the same shops, and without, perhaps, any fundamental questioning we say we love the town, the state,

the nation. The slogans are old and trite to our ears. Yes, of course, men are created free and equal—we've heard that before. Yes, someone hoped that all men everywhere might be free—not a bad idea, you know, but just now we're busy. Often, perhaps, we are more moved by the taste of the good food at our favorite restaurant than by the ring in the words that voice our fundamental humanitarian ideas.

And we forget that the newcomer has left other rocks and rills, other templed

hills, perhaps as beautiful as our own. A dale in Greece, a valley in Yugoslavia—the hearth was warm and inviting, the smoke rose as beautifully from the chimney, the sun came up as happily over the old trees that the newcomer had always known. Is it not remarkable that when suddenly landed in our strange country, with its unknown tongue, queer customs, different background in general, he should feel his heart warmed and his throat filled with emotion? It is not so difficult to understand that feeling as the stranger first sees the towers of New York looming through the sunlight; but can the feeling survive all the disappointments that are inevitable in so imperfect a world?

My little Greek friend, a humble man in his forties, came into the office the other day. I knew by the droop of his usually upright shoulders that he was in trouble. I had known his upstanding son, whose past five years had been spent in our country, and had watched as he developed into an American boy with all the sturdy self-respect, the almost instinctive holding high of his head as a free lad among free lads. That had been good. But what of the father, whose first thirty-eight years had been spent in Greece, in a lovely valley with sheep and goats and church bells? Not so easy for him to adapt his life to American ways, not so easy to feel his heart tighten at the strains of the national anthem.

He came slowly to my desk and slumped down into the offered chair. Without a word he fumbled in his pocket and drew out a snapshot of his son and laid it on the desk. Eight months before, the lad had been called into the Army; and, two months before, he had boarded a ship that eventually landed him in North Africa. Ordinarily I should have asked him what news from his son, but today I saw the slow tears creeping down his face. I waited.

Then, with slow words, but with a grief

that tore his very heart, he said quietly, while the tears flowed freely and unchecked, "He's gone—my boy! My only son! I got telegram that he's killed in Italy!"

My hand went over to his shoulder. There was nothing I could say. His head went down, and his shoulders shook with grief. I knew he felt terribly, terribly alone and frustrated, thwarted of his finest hopes, desolate, without a friend.

"He was a fine lad," I said lamely, and my friend's shoulders jerked. Then he lifted his wet face, and his hands fluttered back and forth in futility as he cried, "Oh, I am joost crazy! My only boy—dead! Joost crazy!" And his head went down again.

I waited. Then his head rose. He looked me in the eye and faltered brokenly, "Yes, he's dead. But it's . . . all right. God bless America, God bless America!"

What does it? There is something—something of which we should be very proud—that can make a man of forty-three, whose only son has just been killed fighting for a country he had never known until five short years before, proudly lay perhaps his greatest sacrifice on the altar of the new land and declare that it is all right. There were no heroics, there was no bombast; only those quiet and deeply felt words, "It's all right. God bless America!" I thought that if Washington and Lincoln and all the humble folk who have worked to make America a good land could have heard him they would have felt that—with all our faults and mistakes—their efforts had not been in vain. For America had taken this strange family from four thousand miles away, out of a different background, strange legends, different ideas of government, but with a love of liberty and of the right to happiness, and had made it feel at home, had molded it and fostered it until it could say that,

SOMETHING IN OUR WAYS

though it had taken the only son, everything was all right.

For several days I did not see him again. When next he came in, I could see at once that, though there was a wound that might never heal, he was carrying on. After some random conversation he smiled and said, "Yesterday I got mad. I was in restaurant on waterfront where longshoremen eat. An' I talk Greek with my friend who owns the place. An' a big longshoreman say to me, 'W'at you talk?' An' I say, 'Joost now I talk Greek, but I talk also French and English. I am an American!' So he say, 'You guys better talk American! Hitler got your folks back home, an' he'll come over here an' get you, too! All you damn Reds!' Well, all my Greek blo'd rush right op here!" he tapped his forehead—"an' I grab that man by back of neck—he was great beeg man—an' I was so mad I could not let go, but I jerk heem from stool an' ron heem to door an' out on sidewalk, an' then I give heem a great beeg shove an' he went down an' slide—whoosh!—on the sidewalk! So a cop was near an' he come an' say, 'W'at goin' on here?' an' I say, 'This man talk Hitler talk in there, an' I fling him out!' So the cop snap bracelets on his wrists, you know, an' ron heem in! An' as they go away I yell at that man, 'I'm better American as you any day!'"

There we are. In five years this Greek

has become a loyal American. I could not help thinking—perhaps uncharitably—of my friends who constantly complain about the dearth of rib roasts and gasoline, about waste in the Army and Navy, about "That Man!" about every petty discomfort and maladjustment the war has brought—friends who would pass this man with a shrug and think of him as a Wop or a Bohunk. It seemed to me that for true Americanism I should have to pass them by and give the palm to the unschooled father who could both suffer quietly in great sacrifice and also resent with violence a slur against what seemed to him right and precious.

Yes—once more—with all our faults, there is something in our air, something in our ways, that makes for loyalty and love. We have a great and intense task ahead of us, when the war is done and the boys come home and we again take up the work of peace, to see to it that this Greek American and the thousands of his brothers from all over the earth shall not be disillusioned and saddened by what we do. We must see to it that the feeling this man had caught shall be justified.

Justus Lane is an old-stock New Englander who has appeared in our pages before with "Our Town—An Adventure in Co-operation," in the Summer 1943 issue.

GROWING NEW ROOTS

CLARE LEIGHTON

THERE are two kinds of immigrants: those who have been forced by outside circumstance to leave their own land, and those who have elected to change their nationality of their own free will. Sometimes I have a suspicion that it is more difficult to belong, as I do, to the second kind. The fret of inevitable moments of homesickness holds greater power when there is nothing to prevent one from packing a bag and returning to the country of one's birth. The self-elected immigrant can indulge in disintegrating periods of doubt, while to the man who has been driven from his own land there is a healthy finality about the surgery of his transplanting.

Even as there are two kinds of immigrations, so are there two main types of men who transplant. These are determined by the nature of their roots. As the roots of some plants stretch wide and flat across the soil, so do the roots of some people. These are moved with relative ease, for, like the little rock plants that thrive and bloom, though there may be no depth of soil in the crannies between the boulders, they can find earth enough for their sustenance in the cement of any city. To this type belong the executive people, and those whose chief concern is with their fellows.

But there is the other type. These are the peasants of the world, and the creative artists. These are the men with the long tap roots which seek nourishment deep beneath the surface of the earth. A gardener will tell you how perilous it is to transplant a flower with such a root. It

must be lifted with tenderness. Snap that root and you destroy its life. These men understand the nature of earth, for they have lived deeply within it. And as their lives have been shaped by earth rather than by the less individualized world of a city, so do they love it and need it with a poignancy that is not understood by the city-dweller.

These are the men who suffer nostalgia most.

But the creative artist is not to be pitied because of this. He is trained to use the emotions he experiences. He knows he is enriched by suffering. And thus, if he is wise, he is able to cope with it.

Nostalgia is one of the strongest of forces. It is beyond control; it resists the reasonings of the intellect. It has the quality of a great wave that rises without warning. It can destroy; but it can also be the germane power for creation. It has fathered some of the world's enduring songs and ballads, and built the cities of the pioneers. Here in North Carolina where I now live I look upon the little tobacco town called Oxford. Some man, surely, back in the days of the opening up of America, was obsessed before the eyes of his spirit by the gleaming spires of his English Oxford. But this pioneer did not sit back and bemoan the change in his surroundings. He cleansed himself through creation; and though the colored porter of today, wheeling the sweet-scented tobacco from the sales, may never have heard of the English Oxford, yet a lasting tribute to homesickness is evident in the naming of this little town.

GROWING NEW ROOTS

Looking back now across the past six years, I can see with retrospective awareness the stages involved in becoming an American.

The first—which is the most unpleasant to our fellow men, and the one past which English visitors rarely get—is that of petty comparisons. Perhaps we are lonely? We must hide the fact, and we bolster ourselves by boasting of our superiority in much that is unimportant. Woven into this is the peculiar tendency to seek, in what we see, those scenes of our old life which hold similarity. So, as we mingle with the crowds at a colored baptism in the City of God in the Wilderness, in the backwoods of the Piedmont country of North Carolina, we feel a sudden happiness in our ability to link this gathering with a religious festival at La Consolation, in the French Pyrenees. For, oddly enough, the English immigrant who, while he was still in Great Britain, would have considered everything outside of England as foreign to him, once he is living in America becomes a European rather than an Englishman; he discovers a bond between himself and Latin, or even Slavic, Europe that does not as yet exist between him and English-speaking America. So, though they would neither have understood nor have liked each other in Europe, the German and the Englishman, meeting in New York, will hail each other as brothers, and wonder what it is that binds them together.

During this period, we long at times for the lost continent of Atlantis. If there were, half way across the Atlantic Ocean, a merging place of cultures and habit, it would all have been so much easier. For, according to the swing of our moods, we feel, in exuberant moments, that we are the rich possessors of two countries, only to turn in times of loneliness and despair to a sense that we belong to no country at all, having renounced our own land

and finding it as yet hard to become absorbed into this new world.

But the process of healing and growth goes on within us, though it be unremarked.

For we have reached the second stage. We have emerged from the period of comparison, and now we find reinforcement in seeking those things in America which are universal and eternal. So we become aware of the rhythm of the earth's year, and watch seedtime and harvest, and learn the shapes of America's barns. We discover the brotherhood of workers upon the earth the world over, and our loneliness is dissolved by sharing in the rituals of the farm. Here, now, we belong. We are no longer outcasts.

But scarcely perceptibly we merge into the third stage. We have seen America's barns, and we have noticed the way in which they differ from our own, and from the barns of the little farms in Europe. Perceiving this, we grow aware of the drama of new harvests. Against the background of our healed spirits we learn the excitement of discovering in America those things which are completely new. And suddenly we begin to know why we may have left the Old World. We have outgrown the fenced land of Europe, with its fierce ownership and its constricted horizons. We have needed the vitality of this young continent, where, comparatively speaking, the songs are yet unmade and the legends still unformed. We have champed at the fatigue of England—for it was in the days of Munich that we left home—and have sought a land where we might dare to create.

In this spirit I revelled in watching my first corn harvest, delighting in the beauty of leaf pennant and tassel. I grew excited over the fields of the Middle West, a mile square, and laughed as I was lost in the middle of a field of corn. And, happy in it all, I felt within me the urge to draw

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and design and make pictures of this new excitement. Should anyone bring to my attention something that resembled England, I grew vexed and impatient; for I did not wish then to be pulled back to the life I had led before coming to America. I sought all those things which were entirely new and different from anything I had ever known. I went to the South, to find cotton and tobacco, and I lived among the colored cotton pickers of the Mississippi Delta and the white tobacco farmers in North Carolina. I learned the ache of bending to pick cotton upon the great plantations of Tennessee; but I learned, too, the enviable rhythm of colored bodies that bend and pick. Perhaps the most important new thing I gained was a sense of the richness that the Negro has given to this American land. I watched him in Courthouse Square in little southern towns, and observed his beauty. Avoiding the standardized culture of the cities, I shucked corn with these colored people upon their little farms, and helped skim molasses in Georgia, where the sorghum mills creaked at the pull of the mules.

And all this time, I knew, I was learning my new home. For I was growing aware of the earth out of which America has developed. In the cities of the world there is a uniformity which is misleading. As we English visitors, with our lecture tours and our publishers' cocktail parties, used to move from New York to Boston, from Chicago to Los Angeles or even New Orleans, we supposed we were learning America. But America, I have found, is more truly to be learned in watching the way a colored man sits his mule as he goes home from work in the fields, or in listening to the talk of farmers around the stove in the country store.

Enriched now by these new discoveries, I had reached the final period in my evolution. This was the healthiest stage of all.

Suddenly I knew what it was that would make me into an American. All this time I had been taking, and receiving. The bargain had been one-sided. To belong, I would have to contribute to America. And, knowing this, I began to understand what was wrong with so many of us immigrants. We lacked the self-respect and pride that can come only from feeling we share in the labors of a country. It is not enough to look on and enjoy America. We must ourselves help to shape it.

Something happened to me one Thanksgiving Day, just after I had taken out my first papers. I was helping a friend plant trees on his farm in Maryland. As I placed young beeches and maples and dogwoods in their holes, I wondered at the sense of satisfaction that I was suddenly feeling. These were not even my trees. Neither was this my farm. And then I knew what was happening inside me. I was beginning to belong. I was changing the skyline of America. These Maryland slopes would blossom with dogwood in the spring, and flame with beech in the fall. The young trees I had planted would grow until they flung their shadows down to the Susquehanna. They would go on growing long years after I was dead.

But something else was happening to me that day. As I dug the holes for those trees, my spade hit against rock. Loosening the earth with a pick, I knew why I had intended to live in America ever since my first visit to this country, more than twelve years earlier. The earth in England is old, and has been worked long and well. There are no rocks to obstruct the spade as one digs. Something within me needed to be able to dig earth that had never before been turned. Pioneer blood flowed still in my veins, though it was a few centuries late in proclaiming itself.

At a later day, after I had come to live in North Carolina, I was driving about the countryside with the dramatist Paul Green

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and his wife, and thanking them for their graciousness in taking me with them. Paul Green turned to me and smiled.

"Don't you know we ought to be thanking you?" he said. "Don't you realize that we are learning our own North Carolina? We are seeing it suddenly, through the vividness of your new vision." And then I discovered something specific we immigrants can give to America.

Until fairly recently Americans have aesthetically mistrusted their own land. They have turned to Europe for beauty. So, characteristically, I have myself been shown England by an American woman. Perhaps the moment has come when we from Europe can show you Americans something of your own countryside. You have grown so accustomed to the things around you that you forget to see the ex-

citing color of blue jeans as the farm hands move among the pale gold of dead corn stalks. Perhaps we can infuse some of our new awareness into the common things of everyday, which you take for granted. You have already done this for the European. Now perhaps we can do something of the same for you.

For it is only through a sense of giving that we immigrant artists can feel our long tap roots safe and firm beneath the earth of America.

Since her arrival in this country in 1939, Clare Leighton has written and illustrated two volumes on the American scene—*Southern Harvest* and *Give Us This Day*. She is now part-time lecturer at Duke University.

AS EVERY ALIEN

ROSAMUND DARGAN THOMSON

*I have walked roads less splendid than this road
And scuffed a poorer dust with luckier feet,
Loved an old country, borne a daily load
Over the cobbles of a trusted street;*

*Mirrored my love in quiet, colloquial streams,
Played in old gardens where my sons would play;
Touched no indifferent gates in exile dreams,
Approached no final bridges till today;*

*Cherished one soil, one sweetness since my birth.
So may I be forgiven if I turn
Not quickly to a new and powerful earth.
Grant me, as every alien, time to learn
Austerity of this strong foster-land:
Stern to the foot, most casual to the hand.*

Rosamund Dargan Thomson was born and bred in France and is of half English, half American descent. She has contributed verse to leading literary periodicals.

JIM CROW IN THE CLASSROOM

MARIE SYRKIN

WHEN WE had "George Washington Carver Day" in my school, as instructed by the Board of Education, my students displayed an attitude of enlightened Americanism in regard to the Negro question which gave me reason to feel that in the North, at any rate, a few of the battles of the Civil War had been won. They paid tribute to the blessings wrought by the Negro scientist, and even though they reduced his accomplishments to "peanuts," their admiration was sincere. They knew about Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, and Joe Louis. They appeared to be shocked by the injustices of Jim Crow, and they seemed to regard discriminatory treatment of Negro soldiers as "unfair." In short, if on the basis of that period I had been asked to rate the attitudes of most of the pupils in terms of marks, I should have felt justified in handing out a sizable number of A's. Apparently the Gettysburg Address had left an impression.

This pleasant illusion was not to last. How skin-deep the apparent enlightenment proved to be was revealed within a few months. We have a fair number of colored pupils in my school. Ordinarily they dwell in peace with the white boys, but occasionally there is a fracas which rapidly degenerates into a racial fight, instead of remaining a quarrel between the individuals involved. It so happened that one of those fights occurred in the lunchroom. In this particular instance, a colored boy was at fault. Instantly there was pandemonium with a really ugly general brawl

developing. Before the period was up, the school was seething. Rumors of every variety were flying around; the students were tense, and it was necessary to post police in and outside the school to prevent further encounters.

Two periods after the fight, I met my senior English class. In it were some of the most intelligent and most capable boys in the school. I was sure that any constructive measures for ameliorating the situation would have to come from some of the boys in this group. This was composition day, for which I had assigned an editorial suitable for the school paper. In view of the explosive atmosphere in the classroom, I told my students to add a paragraph in regard to the timely topic of the day—what could be done to improve white-Negro relations in the school? My pupils, having been assured that their sentiments would not be held against them, wrote with enthusiasm. Their candor has often startled me, but I confess I was unprepared for the solutions they advocated. Here are a few typical samples:

"There have been many fights in this school between the colored boys and the white boys. I think the only way to put a stop to this is to separate them. I do not mean to throw any one race out of the school but I think that they should put one race in the annex and the other race in the Main Building. This seems very drastic but I think in the long run it would do the school, and the country as well, a good deed. If they do this, it would be the beginning of the end of the racial feud."

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"The first thing that should be done concerning the affair up the lunchroom is that all the colored students should be given entrance exams. The ones who fail should be sent to a school where they have all colored students. The ones who pass should be admitted. I believe the white and colored shouldn't be sent to the same school. There should be separate schools for each. This procedure would eliminate the ones who are not interested in learning."

"This high school has experienced a race riot. The cause of this is ignorance on the part of students. My honest opinion is that a large part of the Negro students come to school with a chip on their shoulder. He has an inferiority complex. This complex is due to the difference of race and color which offset him from the white man. Prejudice and discrimination are not part of our democracy. Most of the white students try to foster a more human understanding between their brothers of the different race. There must be a 100 per cent cooperation or racial segregation."

"In regard to fights in the cafeteria and other parts of the school there is much to be said. First of all those who start the fights should be severely punished and depending upon the seriousness of the matter. The students responsible should be discharged from the school before they create further hatred among the different races in this school. It is usually the Negroes who start the fights in our cafeteria. Judging by the weapons they carry around with them, I'd say that they are looking for trouble instead of trying to avoid trouble. The colored people fight very cowardly with knives, razors or whatever they see around to throw at their opponent who is usually the white person."

"Another improvement which would improve this school is to try to get the

colored boys to work together with the white boys. If we have arguments and fights among each race, it would only ruin the reputation of the school and perhaps cause bloodshed. If this cannot be accomplished intelligently the next move would be to discharge the colored boys and send them to other schools. This, of course, would only include the fellows who are troublemakers and cause such riots. The future of this country depends upon the young boys and girls. That is why we must unite no matter if we are of a different race, creed, or religion."

"One way to stop race fights in this school would be to ship all the colored boys to an annex. If you watch them in the lunchroom as I have you will see that they will start a fight over the least little thing. This may be undemocratic but it will certainly stop fights between white and negro boys in this school if all the negro boys are removed. In the South, the negroes are kept in hand and no such trouble exists because white students and colored students are separated."

II

The majority of the pupils, it was clear, favored segregation. Their fine talk about Jim Crow in the South had apparently not registered. Under pressure or provocation, the argument at once assumed a racial character. It was not a particular Negro boy against a particular white boy, or vice-versa; it was the "whites" against the "blacks" regardless of the right or wrong of the issue.

That in this particular instance the Negro boys were apparently the offenders is irrelevant. Granted that the white boys involved had a justifiable grievance against a group of unruly Negro boys, the fact that this resentment at once took the form of an advocacy of an incipient northern Jim Crowism was significant and discouraging.

Separate school annexes for Negroes could lead naturally to the complete pattern of segregation as it exists in the South—yet this very pattern had been repeatedly and dutifully criticized by the pupils as “undemocratic.” That something was fundamentally wrong in the basic attitudes of the students was obvious.

When such an incident takes place, it is the natural desire of those responsible for the administration of any school to hope that it “will blow over.” There is the legitimate fear of dangerous fights, and the perhaps less legitimate wish to avoid unfavorable publicity. Everyone praised Providence because the fight had taken place on a Friday. The week-end would intervene to cool hot heads. Fortunately for all concerned, youth has short memories and its rancors are brief as well as fierce. The teachers knew from gossip among the students that great “revenges” were being planned: battle was to be given after school. The local police precinct was notified, and the expectation was nourished that by Monday the combination of forgetfulness and police force would prevent any serious disturbance.

The expectation proved correct. After the lapse of several days only the most fiery spirits were eager for a fight. We knew that some of these stalwarts had brought knives on the theory that “niggers” always carry knives, and preparedness required similar ammunition. However, the presence of two police cars strategically cruising around the school, and the calmer mood of the majority, prevented any except a few minor clashes. By the end of the week, the tension was over, and the school resumed its normal course. But the few days had revealed some ugly sores. After having read my students’ compositions, and after having spoken to a few individual students, I could cherish no illusions that the problem had been adequately met. A serious racial outbreak

had been averted by a hair’s breadth, but there was no assurance that a subsequent fight—something which always looms as a possibility in a crowded school—might not eventuate more tragically.

Several teachers made the suggestion that a school assembly be held and the subject be thrashed out thoroughly by faculty and students. Such an assembly could be effective only if it were held at once while the emotions of the pupils were still engaged by the question of racial relations. It could not be served up as cold potatoes after all the inner agitation had spent itself. But the suggestion was vetoed on the usual grounds. The assembly might stir up trouble. It might arouse the quiescent. Let sleeping dogs lie, etc.

Such reasoning may smooth over an immediate difficulty; it certainly does nothing to prevent a repetition of a demonstrable danger. The incident, despite the lack of developments, left its scars, and the school did little to heal those scars. One teacher started a club whose purpose was to foster racial amity, but the school as a whole, though every pupil in it had been involved in the excitement of the lunchroom brawl, remained untouched. We were grateful for quiet.

In this combination of timidity and indirection lies the chief weakness of the average school’s approach to an inflammable situation. The Negro-white problem is generally presented with all the techniques of enlightened education just in those localities where there are no Negro pupils to speak of, and consequently no possibility of actual friction. Progressive schools, which pride themselves on admitting one or two hand-picked colored children so that all races will be represented, prepare the most beguiling programs on racial equality. I have seen heartwarming skits on “tolerance” staged by bright little Jewish refugees.

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But the infinitely more difficult and delicate problem of handling an actual explosive situation in a school where the problem really appears in all its hideous reality is all too often side-stepped.

I was very anxious to get the point of view of the Negro students as well as of the white. I knew they would not subscribe to the explanation that colored boys had been the aggressors, and consequently were at fault. It was hard to get them to talk. The first reaction was irritability and touchiness, as well as of suspicion. One boy who spoke to me with some candor managed to cast a new light on the Negro resentment. He told me one of the teachers had called a number of colored boys to his room, and had spoken to them about the necessity for order and co-operation. That seemed all right to me, and I asked him why he objected to what looked like a wise and friendly course.

"Why did he pick on the colored boys? Why didn't he take white boys and talk to them?" Apparently the selection of a group of colored boys who had not been involved in the fight was viewed as discrimination. The teacher had chosen several "good" colored boys on the theory they would have a salutary effect on the others, but the mere process of "picking out" was considered "picking on" by the Negro students. This was a reaction no one had anticipated.

III

Another recurrent source of difficulty is the subject of dances. When the senior dance is held, care is taken that a ballroom be secured in a hotel which does not discriminate against Negroes. The school authorities see to it that this rule is strictly enforced, as student committees, if left to their own devices, are occasionally able to view the barring of their Negro classmates from the senior dance with equanimity. However, dances in the school

gymnasium have been abandoned because white girls and Negro boys, or Negro girls and white boys, would sometimes dance together. Such dancing was far from general; in the great majority of cases, Negro students danced only with each other, but the few lapses from custom were enough to fill some teachers with alarm. As a result dances were discontinued, and the students knew the reason.

It is very difficult to countenance any form of social discrimination without becoming involved in progressively more serious types of discrimination. I think that very few teachers would favor the creation of all-colored schools or annexes, even if such a step were legally feasible. Yet, on the other hand, the spectacle of a few white and colored students dancing together shocked many. It instantly assumed the character of potential miscegenation, intermarriage and what not. Such fears seem to be far-fetched to say the least. That the possibility of sexual attraction exists between white and Negro we know from the presence of six million light-skinned mulattoes among the 13 million American Negroes. It is estimated that only about one-fourth of the Negro population is pure black. Apparently white men have been lightening Negro complexions, with or without benefit of clergy, from the time that slaves were first brought to the United States. There is very little likelihood that dancing at a school party would be more dangerously inflammatory than the normal contacts available to those who desire them. I find that the tendency of students to remain in their particular religious or national groove in social relationships is, if anything, too strong. The chance that so powerful an inhibition as the black and white taboo in the United States would be broken down because of a few couples dancing under a teacher's supervision is extremely slim. Whether we like it or not,

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there is spontaneous segregation among students. That is a different matter from segregation instituted and sanctioned by the school itself. Such segregation not only leaves a sense of injury in the colored student, but serves as a pattern of behavior to the white students. It stimulates their prejudices and nullifies a dozen speeches about "equality."

Almost all the classes are over-crowded, requiring students frequently to share the same seat. I assign seats in alphabetical order, and if the accident of nomenclature brings a white and colored student together, they share the same seat. To avoid needless apprehension, I hasten to add that boys and girls are never seated together, whatever their shade. In all my years of teaching no white pupil has ever objected to the close contact of a common seat with a colored pupil. If an objection were to arise, I would be in a quandary because it would be unjust to expose a colored pupil to the unpleasantness of such enforced proximity for a whole term; on the other hand, yielding to an undemocratic prejudice is a dangerous concession. Happily, the problem remains academic as far as I am concerned.

I cannot say, however, that I have observed any genuine *rapprochement* even after the intimacy of sitting together for a term. The white and colored girls work together peacefully; I have seen them consulting the same book, and—final evidence of harmony—copying each other's homework; but at the end of the period, the colored girl generally joins her colored chum at the back of the room, and the white girl strolls through the hall with her cronies. In the places where voluntary mingling can take place, there is practically none. In the lunchroom, there are colored tables, just as to a much less perceptible degree, there are Italian tables, Jewish tables, and even a Chinese table. We have a handful of quiet solemn Chi-

nese in our school, and they eat together when their program permits. This is not absolute; among the white students there is considerable mixing, but, by and large, the tribes gather around their totem poles. That is just one more of the endless disadvantages of big schools. The population is large enough to allow the formation of national, racial, and religious segments. In a smaller school, there is an inevitable churning of the various elements. The opportunity for stratification is not always present and tempting, for there is no denying the temptation of familiar mores and backgrounds.

As far as the colored students are concerned, the urge to seek the security of a homogeneous companionship is understandably strong and could not be deflected merely by an artificial attempt to foster mixing. The entire environment of the students would first have to be conducive to simple friendly companionship, and this would entail fundamental changes in the attitudes of the community.

IV

The Negro problem is a two-edged sword. It would be a mistake to assume that the grievances are all on one side. Many Negro students present behavior problems. Some are sullen, suspicious, unco-operative, ready to fly off the handle at the slightest provocation—what the students call "touchy." The fact that these traits are the symptoms of a justified and long-festered sense of resentment does not make a particular breach of discipline more tolerable. If a Negro pupil is impudent or disobedient, one cannot expect the teacher to fail to react. No matter how thoroughly the teacher may understand that Edith is "fresh" and tosses her head impertinently at the most trivial remonstrance because she feels the need to demonstrate her "equality," and

because she suspects in every criticism an attempt to reduce her to an inferior status, the teacher cannot create a privileged status for the offending student. The class would resent such favoritism, and it would not make for goodwill.

It took me a little time to learn that an injunction to a Negro student should be given with a calculated mildness if the suspicion of prejudice is to be avoided. In one of my first terms of teaching, I had a colored student called "White" who would come late to class very frequently. I would reprove the lateness as a matter of routine. Some time during the term, the girl came up to me and said, "I am the only colored girl in the class, and you don't like me. You always say, 'Miss White, you are late.'" She emphasized the "White." Not till then did I realize that she was the only colored girl in the class, and that her name was in the nature of a paradox. It was so foreign to me to think in terms of "Negro" or "white" students, that neither of these melancholy circumstances had registered. Till that moment she had been merely a girl who came late chronically and as such had to be reprimanded. She made me aware of the deep wound which the most casual comment could open.

I learned subsequently that Negro students should not be spoken to harshly, and that a smile can be very effective at a tense moment. This is in opposition to the pedagogues who believe that a placating attitude is evidence of supineness and weakness. I know that some teachers would be shocked at the notion that the faculty or the school administration should be obliged to act on the policy that a soft answer turneth away wrath. However, even teachers who are not sympathetic to the underlying sense of injury which requires therapeutic placating generally stifle the impulse "to give him what's coming to him." They, too, have

learned that strong-arm tactics do not work.

It must be admitted that the bending-over-backwards method has its dangers. It can not be used where really serious breaches of discipline are involved. We have delinquent types of all colors, and a true delinquent has to be dealt with firmly no matter what his ancestry. It is the border-line cases that are most pathetic and which present the drama of the complex situation in miniature.

I have a "slow" class—that is to say the pupils in it have low intelligence quotients and even lower records of achievement. In addition, they are likely to present behavior problems. All these blessings generally flow together. In it are three Negro pupils, among them the best boy in the class. He is comparatively intelligent, studious, and has probably landed in the "s" company through the hazards of programming. The other two are of true "s" mettle. One became involved in the year's cause celebre—the lunchroom brawl—and was transferred. The third has carried an even larger chip than usual on his shoulder since the fray.

If I should come into the room and ask the boys to pick up the paper on the floor near their desks, they will obey without enthusiasm but as a matter of course. Tom will look at me sullenly and refuse. "I didn't drop it." Another boy may also offer a similar protest but, having registered his innocence, he will proceed to pick up the paper. Tom, however, feels that his honor is involved. He is particularly resentful of a menial act. For the other students, picking up papers is sharing a necessary school responsibility; for Tom, it is an attempt to place on him the stigma of the servant—the Negro menial.

I don't suppose that Tom formulates all this to himself so explicitly, but this motivation, unreasonable and anti-social as it is in its expression, accounts for the

behavior problems of many colored students. I have deliberately chosen a trivial example because when the offense is more serious there can be no question as to how it must be treated. There can be no parleying with gross impudence or flouting of school rules, no matter what the psychological origin of the turbulence. But Tom presents a difficulty. He must be made to feel that picking up paper at a white teacher's request is not an act of servitude but of co-operation. I can, of course, insist and invoke all the machinery of authority. This might get the paper picked up but I should have failed with Tom—and there are many Toms.

Mitchell, the good boy in the class, is a friend of Tom. Despite their difference in intelligence, and judging from their clothes and manners, in social background, they are chums. Mitchell is disturbed by Tom's antics. "He has a mean temper," he tells me, but I think he is inwardly sympathetic. He shares the same grievance though he is too sensible and well-behaved to express it as foolishly as Tom. Mitchell's presence in the class is a God-send to me because it makes it impossible for Tom to complain that I am "prejudiced," as no act of Mitchell's worthy of commendation goes unhonored or unsung. Part of the praise is for Tom's benefit, but the boy needs far more fundamental reconstruction than I can offer in a few minutes during the English period.

It would be wholly misleading if I were to leave the impression that the majority of Negro students are problem cases. Most of the colored pupils fall into exactly the same categories as the white ones. Some are superior, some indifferent, and some poor. However, a problem exists, and its existence is accentuated by the behavior of a minority. An observable change has come over the Negro students in recent years. Had I been asked to generalize about my Negro pupils ten or fifteen

years ago, I probably would have answered, "They are gay." I remember this as one of my first general impressions—an infectious light-heartedness, a dazzling smile which came in ready answer to one's own smile. I am well aware that these are characteristics whose mention will irritate a great many intellectual Negroes. They see in such a facile characterization the typical patronizing white tendency to present the Negro as a kind of clown. Nevertheless, such was the first impression my Negro students made on me.

Now the picture is different. Today in answer to the same question I would say, "They are unhappy and disturbed." By this I do not mean that each Negro pupil walks around in a cloud of tragic gloom, meditating on the wrongs suffered by his race. There is plenty of laughter and banter as before. But insofar as generalizations are valid, I think this one may be hazarded.

The reasons for the change are so obvious, and have been dwelt on at such length by Negroes and whites alike, that they require only the barest mention. The war has undoubtedly played a large part in precipitating the unrest. The tales of discrimination endured by Negro soldiers are not likely to raise Negro morale. How immediate is the effect can be seen from the following. A colored girl, usually co-operative—one of the better students—declined to participate in the school "war drives." She wouldn't buy war stamps; she wouldn't help in the various salvage campaigns. Her refusal was so deliberate and sustained that her teacher questioned her. Her explanation was simple and, as far as she was concerned, irrefutable. Her soldier-brother had come home on furlough. He had told her that when the soldiers received passes to leave camp, the busses first took the white soldiers. As new contingents of white soldiers would arrive at the station, the Negro soldiers who had

been waiting in line would have to make way for the white arrivals. Sometimes they would have to wait so long that the evening's leave would expire before they could get out of camp. Neither the brother nor the sister felt much zeal for the war effort, and the reflection that life would be even worse under the Nazis was a poor substitute for genuine enthusiasm.

A teacher in a New Jersey high school told me of a student assembly at which the subject discussed was the question of trials for war criminals. The students dwelt on the necessity for just trials even of those Nazis whose guilt in the perpetration of atrocities had been established beyond all reasonable doubt. While they were descanting on law and civilized conceptions of justice, a Negro boy in the assembly arose and asked the devastating question, "Why are you so worried about fair trials for Nazis? How about lynching in the U.S.A.?" What is notable is not the question, which is inescapably obvious, but the fact that the Negro boy was articulate and spirited enough to put it before the entire school. This indicates a psychological revolution which is not limited to the Negro in New York, or New Jersey, or any other locality. It is country-wide. Anyone with his eyes open knows that an explosion is in the making. One scents a premonitory whiff even in the academic shelter of a classroom.

I came in one day and found Tom in a rage. While I was out of the room, before the bell had rung, a boy had thrown a piece of chalk at him. Boys have been known to throw chalk at each other in the interval before the teacher arrives, and schoolboys are not generally agitated by such missiles. But for Tom, it was not the usual schoolboy horseplay; it was an assault on his dignity. In his excitement, he said to me when I walked in: "If I catch the guy, I'll take a knife."

Tom was acting out a new Negro folk-

tale in which the hero fights back any slur on his people. Many stories now circulate among Negroes in which—as Langston Hughes has pointed out—the Negro fiercely avenges insults amid the plaudits of his fellows. It is this aspect which makes it impossible to dismiss Tom merely as one intractable boy, whom a good hiding would bring to his senses, or who should be sent to a reform school if all other measures fail.

After the chalk-throwing episode, Tom and I had a conference. No matter how friendly I am, Tom under questioning always has the look of a cornered animal on whom the hunters are closing in. He doesn't want to talk; he wants to escape. He keeps muttering: "He threw the chalk at me—he got chalk on my clothes." I try to explain that the offense doesn't warrant the violence of his reaction—the thrust of a knife. He doesn't see it my way. Finally, I say to him, "You think he threw the chalk because you are colored." This gets a rise out of him. He looks at me at last, and says: "Mebbe."

Of course, by the time a knife has gotten into the conversation, the matter cannot be allowed to rest. I cannot assume the responsibility of bringing about peace by means of helpful conversation. The whole disciplinary apparatus of the school has to be invoked to make sure there will be no aftermath. Tom's mother comes to school. She promises to put the fear of the Lord into Tom. More melancholy remarks are entered on Tom's none too savory record. (The Dean of boys has received previous complaints about Tom from other teachers.) I have small hope for Tom. One of these days he will probably get into serious trouble—and the underlying cause will be not innate depravity but a romantic notion that he is an avenger of his people's wrongs—a kind of Negro Robin Hood arrayed against the dominant white.

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In the last analysis, any genuine solution is far beyond the scope of the school. The structure of American society cannot be sound as long as thirteen million Americans suffer economic, political, and social discrimination of varying degrees of severity. The huge Negro ghettos of the great cities have created acute problems of adjustment which society can evade only at its own peril. There is a Negro community of 470,000 in New York; 280,000 in Chicago; 250,000 in Philadelphia; 190,000 in Washington. If destitution, delinquency, or disease exists in any of these areas, it becomes a potential focal point of infection for the entire national organism. The job of providing physical and mental health through equality of opportunity and of treatment belongs to society as a whole. But the public schools have immediate tasks in the educational field. Schools in underprivileged areas such as Harlem in New York City should have especially trained teachers, sympathetic with the particular needs of the children, and, above all, small classes so that the teacher has an opportunity to function as a guide and not as an unsuccessful policeman. A larger number of Negro teachers might help. The white children present another type of psychological problem which the schools must face. Insofar as education can achieve these ends, it should be employed more forthrightly and vigorously in helping our white students understand the nature of our democratic goals so that they will not relapse to the savage atavism of Jim Crow in a moment of stress.

In a sense, this is the problem facing all honest education—how to give living meaning to ethical and political ideals which have degenerated into platitudes instead of developing into convictions. One way is not to fear the challenge of

actual occurrences, of existing prejudices, of visible rancors. We do not make them less by ignoring them.

In geometry, in history, or in science, teachers know that they have to give direct and repeated instruction in order to achieve results. Nothing is left to the hazards of inference or the pupil's intuition. However, in the crucial sphere of race relations, of religious bigotry, of all the practical applications of the democratic faith, the schools put their trust in education by osmosis. Saturate the air with impeccable and "non-controversial" sentiments; then wait for them to seep into the students' consciousness and eventually to flower forth into concrete attitudes. Too often the miracle does not take place.

The great merit of the much publicized Springfield Plan is that it does not leave education for democracy to the inspiration of an individual teacher, or to the chance of extra-curricular activities. The question of race relations is not smuggled into some period depending on a given teacher's ingenuity; it is a natural part of the program so that the pupils accept discussion and information calculated to break down prejudice as a normal function of the school day. Only such a conscious gearing of the school system to the inculcation of the ideals which it professes can make our schools equal to their immense present task. Evasion is not the answer; slogans are not the answer. Only a straightforward readiness to grapple with a difficult issue will help.

A teacher in the New York City schools, Marie Syrkin is a familiar contributor to COMMON GROUND. This discussion is part of a chapter from her forthcoming book, Your School: Your Children, to be published in the Autumn by L. B. Fischer.

HERE IN THIS PLEASANT LAND

MILTON KAPLAN

*Here in this pleasant land we have learned to fear,
To whisper and to strain for whisper till
Who and you both echo Jew . . . Jew . . .
Loud in the bony caverns of the ear.
The once-familiar streets are jungle-vined
In shadow; the children's cries are strange with threat;
The silence-lurking words escape the throat
And prowl the darkness of the tangled mind.*

*We learn the jungle's elemental laws
Of hatred flexed beneath the velvet skin
And caution tense against the crouched surprise.
We learn: we learn to shrink from rattling praise
Before the flesh is sudden-fanged with pain,
To listen always for the slinking phrase
Till even words like jewelry flash claws
To rake the startled, tender-breasted eyes.*

Milton Kaplan is an English teacher in one of the New York City high schools, whose poems have appeared in Poetry, The New Republic, Partisan Review, and other magazines.

YES, YOUR HONESTY

GEORGE AND HELEN PAPASHVILY

SIX MONTHS in America and already I was a jailbird. Happened this way.

Weeks seemed extra long that first half year I was in New York. No holidays, no feast days, no celebrations to break up time and then when came finally Saturday around only \$12, most \$14 in pay envelope.

I worked this time in cleaning factory, dip clothes take away spots. The gas we used came up in my head and through my throat and out my ears. Awful place, my every piece meat whole week long was spiced with that kerosene.

But Sundays was good because then we made all day the holiday and took ourselves in Van Cortlandt Park where was country and trees and flowers. There we could make fires and roast shashliks and walk on grass and forget factory. For one day anyway we could enjoy to live like human beans.

From six o'clock on, Sunday morning, subway was packed full. Russians, Syrians, Greeks, Armenians, all kind a peoples, carrying their grampas and babys and gallon jugs and folding chairs and charcoal sacks and hammocks and samovars and lunch baskets and rugs. Hurrying every one to their regular place in the Park so can start tea and lay out lunch, to make last the day a long, long time.

Well, this particular Sunday when began all my trouble was in late spring. Bright blue day with high sky and white lamb clouds. Kind of day that's for adventures.

I had first my American-bought suit on

and purple-striped tie with handkerchief to match and real Yankee Doodle hat from straw. I feeled happy and full of prance.

Five, six other fellows and me, we was visiting around Park. Went from family to family we knowed, drink glass wine here, try piece cake there, meet uncle comed just from Buffalo, see new baby first time out, and so on.

While we was making short-cut down quiet path to get on other side of Park, we came to beautiful tree foaming over with white blossoms—how they call English?—dogswood.

"Flowers. Flowers," one Russian fellow, name of Cyrille, says. "I gonna pick. Take a bouquet my lady friend." I don't know who he was, this fellow, joined us some place we stopped.

"Pick! Pick!" Everybody gets idea. "Pick flowers, take bouquet to all the lady friends."

"Why spoil a tree?" I said. "Use brains better. If you want a make friends nice young lady, ask her take a walk. Tell you gonna show her bouquet bigger than house, bouquet growing right out of ground. Something interesting. That way you get a chance be acquainted while you strolling. Maybe you know so good on way back can invite for ice cream."

No, no, won't listen. They have to break a tree down. Tear his arms and legs off like wolves. Jumping. Jumping. Who's gonna get biggest branch? Makes me sick.

"Personally," I said, "I be ashamed give lady flowers I got for nothing. Stole. Prefer

better to buy. Shows more respect. Or else don't give."

All of a sudden that fellow Cyrille who had biggest bunch, climbed down from top branches, said to me, "I have to tie my shoe lace. Hold my bouquet for a minute, I be back." So I hold. In that minute policeman is there.

"Awright. Awright," he says. "Defacing public property. Awright." Asks us names, starts writing down on piece paper.

"What he does?" I asked Sergei.

"Gives summons."

"Summons?"

"Have to go in a court."

"We arrested?"

"Something like. Pay fine, be O.K. But if gonna ignore, throw away summons, they chase you, lock you up."

"What's your name, buddy?" policeman asking me.

I explain best I can I'm not picking, holding only for other fellow.

Won't believe me. "Don't argue," he says. "Don't argue or I run you in right now."

I explain again. "Boys tell you," I said. "I wasn't picking."

No, he won't believe them neither. "Don't alibi him," he says.

I be sorry be man like that policeman suspicious everybody is liar. What's use person to live if can't trust nobody?

So he writes me ticket and goes away.

And, still tying shoe, that Cyrille isn't back yet.

"This is awful, awful thing," I said.

"It's nothing," Sergei can laugh.

"Nothing! Lived whole my life home never was in trouble. Now I'm six months in America—I'm crook. Nothing, you think? How my father likes to hear such kind news? Arrested. What gonna say our village? First man from Kobiankari comes ever in U.S.A.—for what? To go in prison!"

"Look," Sergei said. "You don't even

have to go in court. Send money. Plead guilty."

"But I'm not."

"You say only. Saves time."

"Then policeman's right never to believe nobody. Say first, I didn't. Then, next time, change around, say I did."

"If you won't plead guilty, must go in a court and have a trial."

"Then I go."

"Lose a day's pay."

"I lose."

"How about we find policeman," Arkady suggested, "try once more?"

"No use," Sergei said. "For myself I gonna plead guilty, but best thing we can do for Giorgi Ivanitch, let's we go back in New York see a fixer."

"What means Vixer?" I said. "Vixer? Kind of fox, isn't it?"

"Ef. Fixer. It's a man. People pays him for fixing things. Knows how to manage all kind permits; fills out income tax



blanks, tears up traffic tickets. Suppose you gonna be refused license for something, give Fixer money, he finds some way 'round to get anyway for you."

"Still sounds like fox."

"That's vixen," Sergei said. "Keep straight words in your head. You get

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everybody mixed up. Fixers got big connections. One thing, funny, I noticed about them, they always relative to somebody. This one cousin to Zoika's brother-in-law."

Fixer had big rooms show up he's a somebody, but floor was imitation marbles; stand lamps some kind cast-metal golded over to look real, and on veneer table sits big plated vase full with paper roses. Is mahogany, panels in walls? I feeled. Nope. Plyboard. Full library with glass doors. I opened. Books won't pull out. Painted wood.

"If he matches office," I told boys, "not even gonna be real man. Gonna be dummy stuffed with straw, victrola in his mouth."

"Shut up, or you be twice in jail."

"So what can I do for you, my boys?" Fixer comes in. "In trouble?"

I show summons.

"Trouble with a police?" Fixer shook his head very sad. "Trouble with a police serious business. No doubt you a foreigner?"

"In U.S.A. I am, yes." I said.

"Well, give me retaining fee. Customary is \$10 but I make for you \$5 and we see what we can do."

Paid him money over.

"Now let's hear."

My committee explained whole story.

Fixer thinks. Looks through a papers. Makes few notes on a pad. Thinks again. "I tell you," he says finally, "only one solution. You go in court tomorrow, plead guilty, is 'bout \$2 fine and is all over. I use my connections on the side fix everything for you."

"Look," I told him, "I didn't pick flowers. I no gonna say I did. Hang me in chains but can't nobody make me say I did do what I didn't do."

So that ends that. No help from Fixer more. He's mad.

Sergei suggested how about we go to

see old Mr. Cohen was years and years in U.S.A. Maybe can think something.

"Listen," Mr. Cohen said, when we told everything. "Fixer Mixer, leave alone all. Take my advices. I been citizen forty-seven years with full papers. President Hayes signed me in personal. Go in court. When they ask you first question say, 'Not guilty, your Honor.'"

"Not guilty, your Honor. What means 'Your Honor'?"

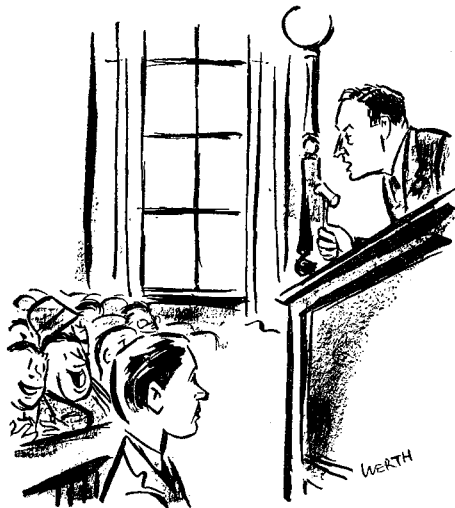
"Means judge. All judges in U.S.A. named Your Honor."

"Not guilty, your Honor. Then?"

"Just tell your story nice way."

"With my broken words?"

"Say best way you can. Probably Judge gonna listen, try understand you. 'Course can happen get a mean judge, tired to pay



attention, don't like foreigners to bother him. But very few those kind. If you get, pay fine, don't argue. But don't be disgusted with U.S.A. Just come and tell me."

"What you gonna do?"

"Why, next time, I vote against, naturally. We don't keep him in office no more, don't act nice."

So next morning I'm in court. Call

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other names. Igor, Arkady, Sergei, Philip. Guilty, Guilty, Guilty. All sent money orders pay their fine.

Now my name. Can't understand word they ask me. I'm nervous. My English is running out of my head like sand through a sieve. How they told me call a judge? Your Honorable? No. Your Highness? No, that's a Russian. Your—? They asking me something. Have to answer. I take my courage in my two hands and speak out. "Not guilty, your Honesty."

Courtroom went wild. Laughing and laughing. Laughing like hyenas. Judge pounds with the hammer. Bang. Bang. BANG! His face is red like turkeys. What I done now? Sure I'm going in Sing Sing, throw me in deepest-down dungeon.

But Judge is giving audience hell first. "Word honesty—applied by this—cause such mirth—contempt of court—"

"Young man." Now he's through polishing them off, it's my turn. "Address the Court as Sir."

"Yes, sir."

"Did I understand you to plead not guilty?"

"Yes, sir. Not guilty."

"This officer says you and your friends were violating an ordinance, destroying a tree. Breaking the limbs."

"Yes, sir. Some was picking. I wasn't."

"Have any proof of this?"

"No, sir. Friends was with me, can't come today. They all pleaded guilty, send you fine. Cheaper than lose a day's pay."

"Why didn't you do that?"

"Because if I'm guilty I admit, but if I'm not guilty, no man gonna make me say I am. Just as much lie say you guilty when you no guilty than say you not guilty when you done wrong. Isn't right?"

"Yes, that's correct. How long are you in the United States?"

"Six months."

"In court here before?"

"No, sir."

"Ever in trouble at home? Assault or kill a man?"

"Yes, sir."

"How many?"

"Hundreds. After first year, I never counted no more."

"Where was this?"

"In a war. I'm a gunner. My job shoot all the Germans we could see. Sometimes Bulgarians, too, but most they didn't have interest to show themselves, poor fellows."

"I see. I mean in civil life. When you were not a soldier, not in the army. Ever hurt or strike anybody?"

"Yes, sir. Once."

"What?"

"Knocked man's teeth out. Few."

"Why?"

"Caught him giving poisoned meat to my dog to eat."

"Understandable. Only time?"

"Yes, sir."

"Sure?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you actually see this man," His Honesty asked policeman, "breaking the tree?"

"No, sir. Not exactly, but all the others admitted guilt and he was with them, holding a bunch of the flowers."

"I believe he's a truthful man, Officer, and you were probably mistaken this time. Case dismissed."

And then His Honesty, big American judge, leaned over. And what you think he said to me, ignorant, no speaking language, six months off a boat, greenhorn, foreigner? "Young man, I like to shake hands with you."

And in front of whole that court room, he did.

This is the fifth of a series of sketches by the Papashvils, to appear in book form under the Harper imprint in the fall. Kurt Werth is the illustrator.

ADOBE VILLAGE

DOROTHY L. PILLSBURY

IN THE village of *mi prima*—my cousin,” Mrs. Tenorio always began the most sparkling of her narratives.

Today we were actually headed toward that fabulous village. We had been on the road since daylight in Diego Salazar’s old wood wagon borrowed for the occasion. His mismatched, scrawny team jerked us over almost impassable trails that wandered aimlessly through piñon-speckled hills toward the cloud-shadowed mountains of northern New Mexico.

Papá Tenorio, elegant in brand new levis, amazing cerise shirt, and broad-brimmed, low-crowned felt hat, perched beside *mamacita* on the high seat. *Mamacita*’s black-shawled and -skirted gloom was punctuated by the little pink-wrapped bundle in her arms which was *Jesuita*.

Flat on the rough plank floor of the wagon sat the rest of us—*Carmencita*, *Hilario*, *Tomás*, *Lupe*, *Luz*, and little fat *Inocencio*. Each little girl’s blue-black hair had been tortured into rows of springy, metallic curls. Each boy’s face had been scrubbed till it shone like well-glazed pottery.

“In the village of *mi prima*,” screamed Mrs. Tenorio above the grinding of the iron wheels, “there is not a *teléfono*, nor an *oficina* for the letters, nor a *tienda* to buy groceries. Two radios there are in the whole village, and they will not run because the batteries are dead and they cannot get new ones because of *la guerra*—the war.”

As the children clung to each other and squealed at every jolt and chattered in two

languages, I thought of New Mexico’s lost and forgotten adobe villages. It is as if the pictures from an old Spanish story book had been dropped here and there in the murky hollows of blue and purple mountains. Their names are as soft on the tongue as a troubador’s song:

*Empediado, Maes,
Los Alamos, San Antonito,
Peñasco, Chilili,
Chacón, Vadito.*

Here in an American state the mores of medieval Spain live on, and the archaic syllables of Cervantes float like dusty cobwebs across sun-bitten plazas.

The same trap that closed behind Anglo-Saxon settlers in the mountains of Tennessee and Kentucky caught, almost a century earlier, their Spanish counterparts in the mountains of New Mexico. In both instances, the violent rip-tide of conquest and settlement receded and flowed on past them. Stranded for almost four hundred years in the fantastic mesaland of the Southwest, adobe villagers have clung tenaciously to the only way of life they knew—that of ancient Spain. They are not the migratory, Spanish-speaking population which clings briefly to other states. These villagers have roots centuries-old in this adobe soil. It is their home land.

Their isolation is not only the result of almost impassable roads and a still sparsely populated state. The barrier of another tongue is even more of an obstacle than uncharted mountain heights and roads blocked with snow or adobe mud. Their

deeply rooted customs, too, little understood by westward-swarming Americans, cut the villagers off more completely than unpopulated deserts. Thrown back upon themselves, the early New Mexicans produced fabulous villages, the least known and the most beautiful in the American scene.

About noon, Mrs. Tenorio shouted, "Look! Look! The village of *mi prima*!"

Clinging to the high seat, I stood up in the careening wagon and strained my eyes in the direction of her pointing finger. I could see no village. There was a deep watermelon-pink arroyo and on its farther side a glazed pink mesa like a tilted table top. Behind the table top were the luminous gauzy folds of thickly forested mountains.

"I can't see any village." I gave up. "Where?"

"Village and mesa all one," said Mr. Tenorio. "Pink mesa. Pink adobe bricks made from it."

So indigenous are the villages to the soil from which they spring that one literally stumbles over them, tucked away in mountain pockets or spread out along gargoyled buttes.

The mismatched team dragged us up the farther bank of the pink arroyo. As we clattered into the sun-drenched plaza, the unreality of the place took my breath away. This wasn't America. This wasn't even modern Spain. This was the Spain of Philip the Second. Don Quixote and Rosinante would amble along the dusty thread of road any moment. Sancho Panza would peer credulously from around the low, flat-roofed little houses that lined three sides of the plaza. Or perhaps he was in the thick-walled, heavy-buttressed church that hovered over the little houses like a brooding hen.

Mi prima, swathed in a black *manta* with silk fringe eighteen inches long, extended a tiny brown hand. Her face was

as softly wrinkled as a weathered adobe wall. "Enter, enter," she urged in a gentle voice. "My house is yours." As rich hacienda owners in days gone by assured guests that their many towered homes now belonged to the guests, so *mi prima* with equal dignity and grace offered us her two-roomed mud house.

Low-ceilinged, freshly whitewashed, the little house buzzed with half the population of the village. Geraniums bloomed in old lard pails in deep-set windows. An ancient hand-carved santo drove his wooden oxen in a niche hollowed out in the thick wall. Beds with mattresses and pillows stuffed with lambs' wool lined the two rooms. An oil-cloth-covered table was heavy with platters of goat meat, blue corn tortillas, chiles filled with cheese, and little fried pies bursting with piñon nuts. There was the good odor of fresh whitewash, drying chile, and piñon smoke from the corner fireplace and the big iron cook stove.

Each villager advanced and inquired for my health and that of *mi mamá* and *mi gato*, *Guillermo*—my cat, William. I reciprocated with polite inquiries for each member of their households including the *animalitos*.

At the head of the table sat *el viejo*—the old one—father in law of *mi prima*. As head of the household his word was law in every detail. He told when to plant and when to harvest, where to pasture the sheep; he approved all marriages. Around him and the great old church centered the intricate pattern of family living.

"No horse racing today," he sighed. "Our young men have all gone away to war. No dances in the plaza on Saints' Days. No cock fights behind the corrals. Would you believe it, Señora, when we gave *Los Pastores* at Christmas time, we gray-beards had to be the shepherds and the devils."

"The village boys make good soldiers,"

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I said, thinking of the Juans and the Manuelitos who had been decorated.

"My son, Esteban, is now *corporál* in the *Pacífico*." *Mi prima* nodded toward the picture of a boy in uniform.

"The best guitar player in the village was Esteban," grieved the old one. "But he will be a good soldier, too. Always we have had to fight, *Señora*. In the old days it was the Apaches and Comanches. You should have heard their war whoops in the high mountain passes or their stealthy foot-falls in the summer pastures where the young lambs slept beside their mothers."

After dinner, a little procession of us formed to see every inch of the village.

In the ancient church that smelled of old wooden beams and ancient mortar and candle grease, the old one pointed with his good stout cane. "That picture of the *Virheen*, *Señora*, came from Spain. A whole pack-mule load of our own woven serapes our people traded for it in the Chihuahua market. And that *Cristus* with the leg and arm missing, that came by pack mule with the first settlers. That bell, *Señora*! Pull the raw-hide thong. Listen, wouldn't you say it had silver and gold in it? One whole *carreta* it filled. You know the *carretas* with their wheels cut from a round of cottonwood tree? And their terrible squeaking! They say you could hear the *carretas* for miles down the Rio Grande y Bravo."

Back from the village, where the pink arroyo spread out in a green watered valley were the garden plots, one for each householder. Here beans and corn and yellow squash and the good red chile grew in orderly rows. Here, too, were gnarled apple and apricot trees and the ephemeral green of the wild plum. Each man owned his own house and garden plot. The grazing land on the mesa and the forest were communal property. Only the most primitive of farming implements leaned against adobe walls—hoes, shovels, and a feeble

plow that was not much better than a sharpened stick.

"The garden plots are now very small," apologized the old one. "According to Spanish law, a man's property is divided at his death equally among his sons and daughters. So every generation the plots are smaller and smaller. Now what is left will not grow enough to feed a family."

"But what do you do?"

He waved his cane vaguely toward the far horizon. "The men have to go away to work, to Colorado or Utah. A man does not like to leave home. As soon as he has a few dollars in his pocket, back he comes to his village. That is the only life he understands, *Señora*."

"Once, when I was young, *Señora*, I went away to work. In the fields they called me a lazy Mexican. That was strange. Mexico our people did not know. We only halted there on our way from Spain to the golden cities of Cibola. We are not lazy, *Señora*. Work is a wise provision of a stern Providence. But you Americans make of work a virtue in itself. It is as if you thought by much activity to batter down the gates of Paradise."

Across the pink arroyo came the evening tinkle of goats' bells. Papá Tenorio began to gather his family into the old wood wagon.

"Do not go," urged the old one. "Tonight I will get blind Bartolomé and his guitar. We will sing you the old songs." Squeaking with a kind of elfin laughter, he remembered. "There was an Anglo came to the village years ago. We sang the old ballads for him. I thought he would explode a blood vessel. He wept, he leaped to his feet, he embraced Bartolomé and his guitar. He wrote the songs down word for word. We had never written them ourselves. You see, *Señora*, so few of us can write. 'Ballads sung in Spain,' he kept muttering. 'Ballads sung when the Moors invaded Aragon!'"

ADOBE VILLAGE

As the old wood wagon clattered across the plaza, *mi prima* screamed above the uproar of barking dogs, braying burros, and tinkling goats' bells, "Vaya con Dios—Go with God."

The children settled down on the hard planks like a heap of tired puppies. *Mamacita* sang softly to the pink bundle in her arms, a sad little song about a little lost child. A full moon turned butte and mesa into incredible battlements. Coyotes let loose their lost-soul laughter from the next hilltop. Little by little as we jolted up one ghostly mountain and down another, I tried to piece together the jigsaw puzzle of the little adobe villages.

It was the need for water that sent the early settlers back farther and farther into the mountains. Spain, bloated with new-found continents, gave them ample acres in land grants and then almost forgot them. The villagers had to adapt themselves to a strange new arid land. What that land gave, it gave grudgingly. They learned much from the Pueblo Indians, but they had to fight off the Comanches and Apaches, year after year. The nearest base of supplies was hundreds of mule-back miles away in the fierce deserts of Chihuahua.

Some way they learned to build their snug little adobe houses. They planted gardens and orchards. Sheep did well on the high mesa land. They clothed and fed this little dot of Spain in the New World. The villagers became competent, self-sustaining. A man could walk erect. A woman had pride in her family and her household. The gracious customs and manners of Andalusia were preserved intact and because of isolation have persisted to this day.

Then came the Americans. Immediately these strangers began to talk of titles and taxes on the land and of written contracts. The villagers knew nothing of money. They knew nothing of taxes. Spain, and in

turn Mexico, exacted no tax on land. There was a small tax on what the land produced, but that only in kind. There were few written contracts. Obligations were by word of mouth and faithfully kept.

Friendly folk, the villagers listened to the newcomers for a time—long enough to lose much of their grazing and forest land. But, though money-poor, they clung to their village homes and their irrigated garden plots. They would not sell; they would not mortgage them. Accustomed to raising food and flocks for use only, the villagers could not understand the terrible energy of the Americans. Commerce and competition were concepts they could not grasp. Often they put their names or more often their marks on legal documents of whose contents they understood not a word. All about them were the Americans, cutting down the forests, raising more and more sheep, building towns and railroads. The villagers puzzled over the strange creatures as they leaned against warm adobe walls or watched the flocks on star-bright nights. At last they gave up trying to understand. They stayed closer and closer in their villages.

Papá Tenorio brought the borrowed wood wagon to a shuddering halt in front of their adobe house. How metropolitan seemed Santa Fé! "Enter, enter," begged *mamacita*. "A cup of coffee and some hot chile will take but a *momento*."

As we sat around the table I asked, "What did your cousin's son do before he went in the Army?"

"He was a shepherd part of the year and in the spring time he helped with the planting."

"And will he return after the war and lead the flocks to the high mountain pastures and plow the garden plot along the water ditch?"

"Verdad!" murmured *mamacita*. "He

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writes that he will be very very content to smell sun on adobe again and piñon smoke coming out of the village chimneys."

"No," contradicted Papá. "El corporal is perhaps a little homesick, seeing he is so far from his village out there in the *Pacífico*. He has learned much about machines, big machines. Is he going to hitch that fuzzy burrito to that little plow and scratch the garden plot along the water ditch?"

He sat shaking his head and pouring more and more red-hot sauce on his frijoles.

I wondered, too.

Baffled and out of step with the American world seething around him, the adobe villager has hidden himself in his anachronous settlement. When hunger has threatened, he has gone out bravely like a beleaguered person, but he has hurried back to the village lost in the New Mexican mountains, to the only life he understands. There is a perpetual question mark in his somber dark eyes. Yesterday he was of the race of pioneers. Today, he is "quaint."

Yet the few county nurses who patrol a state big as a kingdom hate the word "quaint." They know that the stream in the pink arroyo is often polluted, that babies die one after the other in summer time. The father carries the homemade little coffin on his shoulder. The village people follow behind two by two. There is one more little "anheel" in Heaven and one more little white cross in the dense thicket of crosses around the old solid-walled church. Most of the babies are delivered by untrained midwives, and only a little over half the children live to adulthood. Witches still brew their potions for unrequited love and rheumatism, and "bad blood." Of the adults who die, the cause is generally given as "un-

known," which means there was no medical attention.

Rural school teachers, too, hate the word "quaint." Because of the isolation and the pitiful salaries, it is difficult to get any one to take a village school. There is a yearly threat it will have to be boarded up for want of a teacher. The school is often a one-room building with the privies a few feet away. On a bench by the door is a pail of water and a common drinking cup. Old-fashioned double seats and desks, probably salvaged from Territorial days, are good enough for village children. A cracked and warped blackboard hangs against one wall. A pot-bellied stove and wood box fill one corner. Bedraggled and unhappy books lead an aimless existence. Often the teacher is a Spanish American girl who has managed to get a few years' training, but who is frequently as confused as her charges.

Coming from homes where they have heard nothing but Spanish, the children are catapulted into a strange life for which they have had no preparation. If the teacher clings to the rules and teaches in English, the children learn like little parrots, but have little idea what it is all about. If she takes pity on them and her own often limited English, she violates the main reason the parents send their children to school—to learn English. Sometimes she just gives up and teaches mostly the church catechism which is greatly appreciated by the villagers.

The methods and curriculum she has learned were, until very recently, built around little Anglo children in the centers of population of the state. They had little connection with Spanish village life. "Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree" and "Flow Gently, Sweet Afton" touch no well-springs in village understanding. No wonder that half the children are in the first three grades and that beyond these there is a violent dropping away.

ADOBE VILLAGE

Yet the few artists, writers, and folklorists who have discovered the villages weep on one another's shoulders. "We've got to keep them quaint," they agree gustily. "We've got to see that they aren't changed. They're the most beautiful settlements in all the Americas. We owe it to ART!"

And they challenge me belligerently when I do not look convinced. "And what do you want to do with them?" they ask. "Run a string of high-power electric wires to all of them?"

"Yes," I say. "Electricity, good roads, a safe water supply, medical care, modern farm implements, expert advice with their flocks and crops."

"And then some kind of WPA to augment the living they can't earn on their scanty irrigated acres," they sneer.

"Not at all," I argue. "Craftshops in every village—to utilize the skills and artistry they have as a race. Hand-carved furniture, weaving, leather work, tin candle sticks and electric light fixtures. There isn't a beautiful home in Santa Fé that doesn't owe its charm to Spanish American craftsmanship and sense of color."

"Yeah—and good, factory-turned-out, English-speaking teachers, I suppose, so that in another generation there will be no Spanish labials drifting across the plazas."

"No. English-speaking teachers who also speak Spanish," I counter. "Specially trained people, saturated with the culture and the history and the literature of all Spanish-speaking countries. Teachers who know their Cervantes and their Lope de Vega as well as their Shakespeare and Browning. Teachers who would put the picture of Bolivar up on the adobe school-

house wall beside the picture of Washington."

"There is a chance in this state," they have to admit, in all honesty. "We do have little racial intolerance. All facilities are open, even now, to both Anglos and Spanish Americans—hotels, barber shops, hospitals, schools, libraries, and what have you. And no law of miscegenation on our statutes."

"And that is a fine beginning," I hammer at them. "Two hundred thousand Spanish-speaking citizens are here in this one American state. Almost half our total population. And don't think that Mexico and all Latin America isn't watching what we do with the Latin America in our midst while we make come-on gestures to them far afield."

But they look unconvinced. "The thing for us to do," they say, "is borrow the wood wagon of Diego Salazar ourselves and load on it every canvas and every tube of paint we own. And paint! Paint the women in their long black mantas walking up the pink arroyo with a pail of water in either hand. Paint every little pink adobe house and every old wall and the rotund church and the boys bringing in the goats, and fill a hundred canvases before the beauty of those little villages vanishes into thin air when reformers like you get hold of them."

But I still wonder. I think a good life and ART can go hand in hand.

Dorothy L. Pillsbury has contributed two previous sketches of Spanish American and Anglo culture in the Santa Fé region to our pages. These appeared in the Summer 1943 and Winter 1944 issues.

FIGHTING TOGETHER

SERGEANT BEN KUROKI

A SOLDIER's job is to fight, not talk, but I'll do the best I can.

I've spent most of my life in Hershey, Nebraska, which isn't where they make Hershey candy bars. Hershey is so small probably none of you has ever heard of it. Before the war the population was about 500; now I guess it's about 300. I didn't even live in Hershey; my father had a farm a mile north of town. I remember the farmers used to go to town every Saturday night and stand in groups on the street corners talking about their cows and horses. We've lived on that farm since 1928, and after I finished high school I helped my father work it until the war came along.

The last two years in the Army are what really matter, though. I learned more about democracy than you'll find in all the books, because I saw it in action. When you live with men under combat conditions for 15 months, you begin to understand what brotherhood, equality, tolerance, and unselfishness really mean. They're no longer just words. Under fire, a man's ancestry, what he did before the war, or even his present rank, don't matter at all. You're fighting as a team—that's the only way a bomber crew can fight—you're fighting for each other's life and for your country, and whether you realize it at the time or not, you're living and proving democracy.

Something happened on my first mission that might give you an idea of what I mean. We were in a flak zone—the anti-aircraft were terribly accurate—and we

had a flock of fighters attacking us. A shell burst right above the tail, and flak poured down. Our tail gunner was a young kid named Dawley, from New Jersey. The piece that got him was so big it tore a four-inch hole through a quarter of an inch of aluminum and double-welded steel. It caught him just above the car. It went through his fur helmet, and in so far we couldn't even see it when we got to him.

I was firing the right waist gun on our Liberator, that day. All of a sudden I heard him yell over the interphone: "I'm hit in the head. Let's get out of here!" We couldn't leave the guns until we'd shaken the Messerschmitts that were after us—it would have been suicide—but in a few minutes the tunnel gunner and I were able to get back to the tail.

We pulled Dawley back into the fuselage, so that we could work on him and at the same time watch out for more fighters. Then we took off our fur jackets and covered him up. It was about 10 below zero and we were nearly freezing to death. He was in terrible shape, semi-conscious, but he couldn't open his mouth to speak. His lips seemed to be parched, as though he were dying of thirst. We couldn't understand how he was still alive.

I called the radio operator, because he's the one who is supposed to administer first aid on a Liberator but, instead, the co-pilot, a first lieutenant, came back. He was going to give Dawley a morphine injection, but I stopped him. They'd taught us in gunnery school not to give morphine

for head injuries—it might kill the man instantly. The co-pilot had either forgotten or was so excited he could think only of stopping the pain. Anyway, I motioned to him—we couldn't hear each other above the roar of the motors—I pointed to my head and shook it. He evidently understood, because he didn't give Dawley the morphine.

That tail gunner lived to fly and fight again, and the last I heard he had completed his tour of duty. Whether or not I was instrumental in saving his life by stopping that morphine injection isn't important—it was just that we had to work together regardless of rank or ancestry.

The tunnel gunner that helped me with him was Jewish, I'm a Japanese American, the bombardier of our crew was a German, the left waist gunner was an Irishman. Later I flew with an American Indian pilot and a Polish tunnel gunner. What difference did it make? We had a job to do, and we did it with a kind of comradeship that was the finest thing in the world.

II

That first mission was over Bizerte; it was the 13th of December, 1942, and we'd just arrived in French North Africa from England two days before.

It was a funny thing—I'd just been assigned to a crew the day before we left England, although the group had been based there for about four months. I'd finished gunnery school more than a month before and, ever since, I'd been trying to get assigned to a crew. It wasn't easy; I'd talk to the pilot whenever I knew there was going to be an opening, and each pilot would assign me temporarily and then replace me when the time came for permanent assignment. I understood well enough how they felt; and they knew I was as good as any man they did assign, but still they were uneasy. But I wanted to

get into combat more than anything in the world, so I kept after it.

In fact, it had been one continual struggle from the beginning of my Army career, and I felt that I had done pretty well to get overseas and to gunnery school.

Two days after Pearl Harbor, my kid brother Fred and I drove 150 miles to Grand Island, Nebraska, to enlist in the Army Air Forces. We were held up for nearly a month because of all the confusion and misunderstanding in Army camps at that time. For the first time in our lives we found out what prejudice was.

I began to realize right then that I had a couple of strikes on me to begin with, and that I was going to be fighting two battles instead of one—against the Axis and against intolerance among my fellow-Americans.

Finally, after two more trips to Grand Island and three telephone calls, Fred and I were accepted at the recruiting station at North Platte, and sent to Sheppard Field, Texas, for basic training. There was so much prejudice among the recruits there that I wondered if it would always be like that, if I would ever be able to overcome it. Even now I would rather go through my bombing missions again than face that kind of prejudice. Fred could hardly stand it. He'd come back to the barracks at night and bury his head in his pillow and actually cry. We were not only away from home for the first time but, because of this discrimination, we were the loneliest two soldiers in the Army.

After basic, I was sent to clerical school at Fort Logan, Colorado, and then to Barksdale Field near Shreveport, Louisiana, for permanent assignment. Of the 40 clerks sent there, I was the last assigned. The most discouraging thing was that I had no assurance I would ever be assigned. About the only thing that kept me going were the wonderful letters of encourage-

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ment I received from home. My sister would write that I had to realize Americans were shocked by Pearl Harbor and that many were unable to distinguish between Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent. I still was without a friend in the Army, though, and that made it bad. There was only one boy who was kind to me at all—he used to get my mail for me when I was on K. P. and couldn't get away.

I was finally assigned to a squadron in General Timberlake's bomber group, which had been formed at Barksdale and was ready to move to Fort Myers, Florida, for final training. A few days before we were to leave, the commanding officer of my squadron called me in and told me I wasn't going—that I was to be transferred to another outfit. That was about the worst news I had ever heard. I asked why, and he said he had nothing to do with it. He started asking me questions then—how I liked the Army, and so forth. I told him pretty bluntly the prejudice I was encountering, and that I didn't even go into town because I couldn't enjoy a minute of it when I did. He seemed sympathetic enough but said there was nothing he could do to stop my being transferred. But my words must have had some effect, because the day before the group left he called me back and told me to pack my bags—that I was going with them.

At Fort Myers I did clerical work for about three months. I gradually began to win over some of the soldiers, and the boy who used to get my mail for me at Barksdale became a good friend. We were in a truck accident one day, and I was able to help him. After that we were inseparable.

When the group had finished training and was ready to go overseas, I was given orders, as I had been at Barksdale, transferring me out of my squadron. This was even worse than the time at Barksdale, because I really wanted to go overseas and

had been counting on it for three months. General Timberlake—he was then a colonel—was already up north with the air echelon of the group, so I couldn't see him. I went to see the squadron adjutant and begged him, with tears streaming down my face, to take me along. He said there was nothing he could do about it, that it wasn't because I was of Japanese descent. But he did agree to talk it over with the group adjutant, and in about an hour he came back with the good news that I would remain with the outfit. I was about the happiest guy in the world.

III

We shipped north and sailed from New York the last day of August 1942. Ours was the first Liberator group sent to the European theater. As soon as we had our base set up in England, I applied for combat duty. I had to beg for that too, but at least I was sent to gunnery school. It wasn't much schooling—about a week, I guess—a lot different from the way it is now, when every crew member goes to school for months in this country. I really learned to shoot the hard way, in combat.

As a result of the recommendations of the armament officer, I was accepted on Major J. B. Epting's crew as an auxiliary member; we were to go out on a raid the next day, but it was cancelled because of the weather. About a week later I was permanently assigned to his crew. The next day we flew to Africa and my tour of duty began. Once again I'd received a break just in the nick of time.

We were glad to get away from the cold, fog, rain, and mud of England. Africa seemed like heaven for the first two days. It was dry and warm and the sun was shining. But after the second night, we weren't so sure it was an improvement on England. It started to rain and kept on raining until we finally couldn't operate at

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all. We had no tents or barracks or any place to sleep. We'd left England in such a hurry we didn't even have mess kits but ate our canned hash and hardtack out of sardine cans.

And the mud! Our group flew three or four missions from that base and then the planes couldn't even get off the ground. They'd start to take off and sink into the mud all the way up to the belly; then we'd have to unload the bombs, dig the ship out, reload and try again. After about 18 days we gave up and moved out of there.

From French North Africa we went to the Libyan desert, near Tobruk, not long after the Germans had surrendered it. Tobruk was the most desolate place I have ever seen, full of abandoned tanks and guns and broken buildings. Only a church had escaped complete destruction, and no living person dwelt in that city. We were there three months. In all that time, we were able to take a bath only once, and that was when we were given leave to fly to an Egyptian city for that specific purpose. That was the only time we shaved, too; we must have looked like a convention of Rip Van Winkles before we left.

There were no laundry facilities; we were allowed only a pint of water a day for everything. This water we drew from a well which we had to abandon after a while when we found some dead Germans in it. We were at least 300 miles from any town, excepting the dead city of Tobruk. We had no entertainment of any kind; when we weren't on raids we just lay around, or took walks in the desert.

The most dismal Christmas Eve of my life I spent on that Libyan desert. It was cold, and we didn't even have tents to sleep under. We slept in our clothes and didn't even take off our shoes. Our morale was certainly low that night, as we thought of the fun we could be having in the States, and of our families and friends back there. But it's things like that, as

well as actually fighting together, that bring men close to one another, as close as brothers.

Our group was going on raids about every other day while we were in the desert, and they were all pretty rough. We bombed Rommel's shipping lines over and over at Bizerte, Tunis, Sfax, Sousse, and Tripoli in Africa. Then we started in on Sicily and Italy.

We had some boys of Italian parentage flying with us, and whenever we took off to bomb Naples or Rome I'd kid them about bombing their honorable ancestors. "We're really going to make the spaghetti fly today," I'd say, and they'd retort that they couldn't wait to knock the rice out of my dishonorable ancestors.

We participated in the first American raid on Rome last July. It was the biggest surprise I'd had so far; we thought we were going to run into heavy opposition, and we were almost disappointed when we found hardly any. We bombed Sicily and southern Italy at altitudes of 25,000 feet, and it really gets cold at that height. One time over Palermo it was 42 below zero. I froze two oxygen masks; after that I had to suck on the hose to get any oxygen. Even at that height we could see our bombs breaking exactly on their targets, and as much as an hour after we had left, we could see the smoke rising from the fires we had caused.

It gave you a funny feeling; you couldn't help but think of the people being hurt down there. I wasn't particularly religious before the war, but I always said a prayer, and I know for sure that my pal Kettering, the radio operator, did too, for the innocent people we were destroying on raids like that.

But we were in no position to be sentimental about it. The people knew they were in danger, and they could have gotten out. Besides, we weren't fighting

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against individual people, but against ideas. It was Hitlerism or democracy, and we couldn't afford to let it be Hitlerism. And so, unfortunately, it was German and Italian lives or ours. That was the only way you could look at it.

IV

It was a happy day when, after three months of Libya, we received orders to return to England. But then, after a month or so, we returned to Africa. This time our base was set up near the city of Bengasi in Libya. Here we had a complete dummy target of what we later learned were the Ploesti refineries.

Up to this time I had been a tail gunner, but now I was assigned to the top turret, the position I held throughout the rest of my missions. To celebrate the event, Kettering painted in big red letters across the glass dome of the turret: "Top Turret Gunner Most Honorable Son Sgt. Ben Kuroki." "Most Honorable Son" was what they usually called me—that or "Hara-kiri." They were a great bunch.

Every day that we weren't on missions over Sicily, 175 Liberators loaded with practice bombs would take off in groups at regular intervals and bomb duplicates of the real target. Each group rather than each plane had its specific target, so that it was really a dress rehearsal of the actual raid. Some of the planes flew so low they came back with their bomb-bay doors torn off; we had to dodge groups of Arabs and their camels all over the desert.

During all our practice for Ploesti we were intensely curious as to what our target was going to be. Rumors of all kinds were floating around, but no one thought it would be Ploesti because no one could imagine how we could carry enough gas to get there and back.

Our base was guarded by British anti-aircraft gunners, and we used to ask them what they thought about our flying so low.

They said it was an advantage from the point of view of escaping the heavy anti-aircraft fire, but that we would be dead ducks for anything smaller than 40 millimeter cannon. Right then we began to think of the approaching raid as a "suicide" mission.

The last week in July every crew member in every group was restricted to the base until after the mission, but it was not until the day before we left that we were told the target was the Roumanian oil fields. We were briefed all that day and into the night. The American engineer who had constructed the Ploesti refineries talked to us; he knew the exact location of every refinery and every cracking and distilling plant. The information proved invaluable the next day. They showed us motion pictures, too, which gave details of the individual targets of each group.

In the afternoon Major General Breerton, commanding general of the Ninth Air Force, came around in a staff car and talked to us for almost an hour. He said we were going on the most important and one of the most dangerous missions in the history of heavy bombardment, that it had been planned in Washington months before. He told us that Ploesti supplied one-third of all Germany's oil and nearly all of Italy's, that the raid was timed, furthermore, to cut Hitler's fuel supply as his divisions rushed to defend it against the coming Allied invasion.

When he finished, our group commander—not General Timberlake, who had just been promoted from colonel and was now a wing commander, but the new group commander—briefed us again, and went into minute details of the takeoff the next morning. He tried to encourage us as much as possible. "I'll get my damn ship over the target if it falls apart," he said.

He got his ship over the target all right—we were close behind him. And we saw it when it fell apart, flaming to the earth.

That afternoon before the raid, he emphasized that nobody had to go who didn't want to; it was really a volunteer mission. No one declined, but we were all very tense. Someone had mentioned that even if all the planes were lost it would be worth the price, and that started more talk about its being a suicide mission.

We didn't sleep very much that night; there was none of the joking that usually went on among our crew. We tried hard to sleep, because we knew it would be a long trip and we had to be at our best, but it was not easy.

The first sergeant blew the whistle at four in the morning. While we ate breakfast, the ground crews, who had been working on the planes for the last two days, gave them a final checking over. Those planes were beautiful, parked wing to wing in a long line on the runway.

We took off at dawn. It was a perfect summer day, warm and balmy. The lead plane of the group started out, and the others followed at precise intervals until finally the whole group was in the sky in perfect formation. Our group joined other groups from nearby fields at prearranged places. It was all split-second timing.

We were keyed up. We knew it was going to be the biggest thing we had ever done, and we were determined it would be the best. It was the same with the ground crews; they had always taken great pride in the ships, but this time they had gone overboard to get them in perfect condition. They shared our excitement and anxiety, too.

From Bengasi we flew straight over the Mediterranean. It was very calm and blue that day. We were going along at about 5,000 feet when suddenly we saw one of the planes ahead take a straight nose-dive. It went down like a bullet, crashed in the water and exploded. For half an hour we could see the smoke from it. It gave us a haunted feeling, as of approaching dis-

aster—we could see that not a man on that plane had had a chance to escape.

A couple of hours after we left Bengasi, we were crossing the mountains of Italy, going up sometimes as high as 10,000 feet to get over them. Then the Adriatic and into Yugoslavia, through Bulgaria and across the Danube into Roumania. Over the Danube valley, in Roumania, we went down to about 300 feet, so low we could easily see people in the streets waving at us as we went over. They must have thought we were friendly bombers because we were flying so low. Or maybe they recognized the white star on our wings and were glad we were coming.

About 10 miles from the target, we dropped to 50 feet, following the contours of the land, up over hills and down into valleys. Our pilot would head straight for the hills, and every time I thought sure we'd crash right into them, but he would pull us up just in time, and just enough to get over the ridge and then down into the next valley. Coming back we were flying part of the way at five and ten feet off the ground, and some of the planes returned to base with tree tops and even cornstalks in their bomb-bays.

We had a very good pilot, our squadron leader, Lt. Col. K. O. Dessert. His co-pilot was our regular pilot, Major Epting. Between them they got us through Ploesti without a scratch, but it was a miracle that they did.

We came into the oil fields at about 50 feet and went up to about 75 to bomb. The plane I was on was leading the last squadron of the second group over. Five miles from the target, heavy anti-aircraft started pounding us. When we saw the red flash of those guns we thought we'd never make it. We really started praying then. If they started shooting at us with the big guns at that distance, they would surely get us with smaller and more maneuverable batteries. We remembered the

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British anti-aircraft men who had said we'd be dead ducks for anything under a 40 millimeter cannon. At our height you could have brought a Liberator down with a shotgun.

Ploesti was wrapped in a smoke screen which made it very difficult to find the targets. When we got over, the refineries were already blazing from the bombs and guns of the planes ahead of us. Red tracers from the small ground guns had been zig-zagging all around us for half a mile or more, and the guns themselves were sending up terrific barrages. Just as we hit the target, gas tanks started exploding. One 10,000 gallon tank blew up right in front of us, shooting pillars of flaming gas 500 feet in the air. It was like a nightmare. We couldn't believe our eyes when we saw that blazing tank high above us. The pilot had to swerve sharply to the right to avoid what was really a cloud of fire. It was so hot it felt as though we were flying through a furnace.

The worst I saw, though, was the plane to the right of us. Light flak must have hit the gas, because suddenly, it was burning from one end to the other. It sank right down, as though no power on earth could hold it in the air for even a second. When it hit the ground, it exploded.

Every man on that ship was a friend of mine, and I knew the position each was flying. I'd seen planes go down before, but always from a high altitude, and then you don't see the crash. This way it seemed I could reach out and touch those men. The ship's co-pilot was an 18-year-old kid who'd lied about his age to get into aviation cadet training. We always called him Junior. When our regular co-pilot, who was firing the right waist gun that day, saw Junior's ship go down, he let loose with his gun like a crazy man. Junior was his best friend.

Then we saw flak hit our group commander's plane. In a second it was burn-

ing from the bomb-bay's back. He pulled it up as high as he could get it. It was fantastic to see that blazing Liberator climbing straight up. As soon as he started climbing, one man jumped out, and when he could get it no higher, two more came out. Every one of us knew he had pulled up in order to give those men a chance. Then, knowing he was done for, he deliberately dove into the highest building in Ploesti. The instant he hit, his ship exploded.

We left Ploesti a ruin. Huge clouds of smoke and fire billowed from the ground as we pulled away. It was like a war movie, seeing those masses of flames rolling toward you, and white flashes of 20-millimeter cannon-fire bursting alongside of you.

We got back to camp 13 hours after we had taken off. It was the longest bombing mission ever flown, and that explains why it was necessary to do it at low altitude. If we had bombed at the usual level, we would never have had enough gas to get back. It was also the most dangerous mission in the history of heavy bombardment, ranking as a battle in itself. It is officially regarded not as the Ploesti raid but as "the battle of Ploesti."

There was no line at the mess hall that night. Even though we were starved, we couldn't eat when we thought of the men who should have been standing in line and weren't. And even though we were dead tired, we couldn't sleep. I know I didn't sleep for nights. The ground crews kept the runway lights on all night, and many stayed up until morning, though they knew the planes they had worked so hard on and their friends, the men who flew them, were not coming back.

The next morning was rough, too. We always got up at six o'clock, and there was always a lot of yelling back and forth—sometimes we'd throw rocks at each other's tents. The only yelling we heard that

morning was our co-pilot calling for his friend Junior, although he had seen him go down in flames the day before.

V

Ploesti was my 24th mission. I was assigned to another crew for my last raid.

For a long time I had been thinking about volunteering for more. I wanted to do that for my kid brother; he wasn't overseas then. I asked my commanding officer if I could go on five more. He said I should go home; in fact, there were orders out already for me to do so, and a plane ticket to the States waiting for me. But he finally gave me permission.

I flew with the only full-blooded American Indian pilot in the European theater; everybody called him "Chief," but his name was Homer Moran, and he was from South Dakota. Four of those extra five missions I flew from England over Germany. I nearly got it on the 30th. We were over Munster, and a shell exploded right above the glass dome of my top turret. It smashed the dome, ripped my helmet off, smashed my goggles and interphone. The concussion threw me back against the seat, but I didn't get a scratch. I thought the ship had blown apart, the noise of that explosion was so loud. I passed out, because my oxygen mask had been torn off, but the radio operator and the engineer pulled me out of the turret and fixed me up with an emergency mask.

Things like that aren't explained just by luck. I must have had a guardian angel flying with me that time and on the other missions, too. They say there are no atheists in foxholes; I can tell you for sure there are none in heavy bombers either.

It took me three months to get my five missions in, the weather was so bad. And then when I came home it was by banana boat and not airplane.

I left England the first of December.

They wanted me to stay over there, with my outfit, as chief clerk in operations, but from the beginning I have felt my combat career would not be over until I had fought in the South Pacific, and so I asked to come home for a brief rest and then be assigned to a Liberator group there.

It was December 7, two years to the day after Pearl Harbor, when our ship reached New York. I thought I was a pretty tough sergeant, but when I saw the Statue of Liberty and the sunlight catching those tall buildings, I damn near cried. I knew I had come home, and I felt so lucky to have got through all those bombing missions without a scratch I said a prayer of thankfulness as I leaned against the rail. I only wished that all my buddies could have come home too.

I spoke earlier of having two battles to fight—against the Axis and against intolerance. They are really the same battle, I think, for we will have lost the war if our military victory is not followed by a better understanding among peoples.

I certainly don't propose to defend Japan. When I visit Tokyo it will be in a Liberator bomber. But I do believe that loyal Americans of Japanese descent are entitled to the democratic rights which Jefferson propounded, Washington fought for, and Lincoln died for.

In my own case, I have almost won the battle against intolerance; I have many close friends in the Army now—my best friends, as I am theirs—where two years ago I had none. But I have by no means completely won that battle. Especially now, after the widespread publicity given the atrocity stories, I find prejudice once again directed against me, and neither my uniform nor the medals which are visible proof of what I have been through have been able to stop it. I don't know for sure that it is safe for me to walk the streets of

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my own country. All this is disappointing, not so much to me personally any more, but rather with reference to my fight against intolerance. I had thought that after Ploesti and 29 other missions so rough it was just short of a miracle I got through them, I wouldn't have to fight for acceptance among my own people all over again.

In most cases I don't, and to those few persons who help breed fascism in America by spreading such prejudice I can only reply in the words of the Japanese American creed: "Although some individuals may discriminate against me, I shall never become bitter or lose faith, for I know that such persons are not representative of the majority of the American people."

The people who wrote that creed are the thousands of Japanese Americans whom certain groups want deported im-

mediately. These Japanese Americans have spent their lives proving their loyalty to the United States, as their sons and brothers are proving it now on the bloody battlefield of Italy. It is for them, in the solemn hope that they will be treated justly rather than with hysterical passion, that I speak today.

This was an address by Sergeant Ben Kuroki, U. S. Army Air Force, before the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, in February. He holds two Distinguished Service Crosses and the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters.

Reprints are available from the War Relocation Authority, Washington, D.C., or from the Japanese American Citizens League, 413 Beason Building, Salt Lake City, Utah.

YOUNG AMERICANS

THE NISEI SPEAK

CAREY McWILLIAMS

NOT ONLY has the relocation of Japanese Americans since Pearl Harbor been a vast experiment in planned resettlement—challenging in the unprecedented demands it has made on available techniques and resources—but it has also been a stupendous human drama. The time has not yet arrived when this story can be told in full. It will have to be told in retrospect by an evacuee, some one who actually saw, felt, and was a part of this amazing adventure. The adventure itself involved highly diverse types and an infinite variety of individuals, from aged farm laborers to sophisticated artists, from shopkeepers to professors. The impact of the experience has naturally varied with the type of individual involved. For some it has meant nothing but bitter denunciation and defeat; for others it has promised liberation and new opportunities. Regardless of its varying impact on particular individuals, it has profoundly affected the lives of every one involved. Letters and documents the evacuees have sent me suggest the enormous drama of the experience, the feelings and emotions it has precipitated among the people themselves.

As the weeks after Pearl Harbor passed, the shadow of evacuation deepened. What had seemed a remote possibility began to loom large as a very real eventuality. Preparing to leave for an assembly center, Kenny Murase, a brilliant young Nisei, wrote these lines: "A lot of you have felt the same way—you get an awfully funny feeling, knowing that in a few days you are going to be living in a world so unbeliev-

ably strange and different. You never thought such a thing could happen to you, but it has. And you feel all tangled up inside because you do not quite see the logic of having to surrender freedom in a country that you sincerely believe is fighting for freedom. It hurts especially because you were just beginning to know what freedom really means to you, as an individual, but, more so, as one of 130,000,000 other Americans who are also beginning to know the meaning of freedom. You are upset about it but you are not mad, though there was a time when you were furious and you wanted to shout from the house-top that you thought it was an out-and-out fascist decree, and that this was America, a democracy, and you wanted to know what's the Big Idea. . . . You think you know something about the background of evacuation—about California's long anti-Oriental history—and it helps you to understand why it was so, but it still does not ease a disturbed conscience that is trying to seek an explanation consistent with a deep-seated faith in the workings of American democracy. You start off on another line of reasoning, and you think you are getting close to an attitude that will keep you from turning sour and cynical. You begin to see democracy is something tremendously alive, an organic thing, composed of human beings and behaving like human beings; and therefore imperfect and likely to take steps in the wrong direction. You see that democracy is still young, untried and inexperienced, but always in the process of

growing and growing towards higher levels of perfection. And because you realize that democracy is a process, a means towards better ends, you now see that it is not precisely the failure of democracy that produces undemocratic practices. You know that you cannot say democracy has failed because truthfully we have not attained a level of democracy that can be fairly tested. You are not going to judge democracy on the basis of what you have found it to be, but rather upon the basis of what you think it is capable of. You are aware that discrimination against racial, religious, and political minorities, attacks on the rights of labor, suppression of the press and radio, and all the rest of the undemocratic practices in America today are not the products of the free will of the people; but rather the actions of powerful minorities who stand to gain economically and politically by such measures. . . . As you prepare to entrain for a distant resettlement camp, you think you have some objectives pretty well established in your mind. You are not going to camp because of 'military necessity'—you know that such a reason is groundless. You are going because groups of native American fascists were able to mislead an uninformed American public, and this partly because you yourself were uninformed and unaware of your responsibility as one integral part of the democratic process."

"We were on the back seat of the Greyhound bus," writes an eighth-grader, "with crowds of people outside bidding us goodbye. As the bus started to move, I caught a last glimpse of our pink house. How I wished then that I could stay. I was not happy, nor were my parents. But my little sister and brother were overjoyed since it was their first ride on a Greyhound bus. They didn't know why they were moving, they just thought that they were moving to another place. My mother was not happy.

She was smiling but I could tell by her face that she was thinking of the hardships ahead of her. When we came near the City Hall, almost everyone in the bus looked out to see it, because they knew that it would be a long time before they saw it again. Soon the bus started to slow down and I looked out the window and saw rows of little houses. We had reached the gate of Tanforan."

"The first time I have ever been among so many Japanese," writes another, "was on the day of May 1st, when we arrived at Tanforan. There were only three in our family so we had to have a horse stable for our apartment. Thinking it was about time for supper, we set off for the messhall. The road was very muddy. On the way I saw many people who had just come in. They were all dressed in their best. Many of them had no umbrellas and were soaking wet. Children and babies were crying. Men were all carrying heavy baggage, and the women had tears in their eyes, making their way through the mud. I thought it must be very discouraging for them, getting their good shoes muddy, mud getting splashed on their clothes, and then finding that they were to live in a horse stall where it still smelled." "When they have roll calls," wrote another, "the sirens ring. I get so scared that I sometimes scream and some people get scared of me instead of the siren. I run home as fast as I can and then we wait about five minutes and then the inspector comes to check to see that we are all home. I hate roll call because it scares you too much."

"It would be quite impossible," writes Togo Tanaka, "to describe how I felt on that dusty, dismal day of April 28th, 1942, when suddenly I found myself and my little family staring out at the world from behind a barbed wire fence. . . . Let me try to tell you something about how my wife and I felt, as we sat in the misery of a Manzanar dust storm one rather gloomy

afternoon, with thick clouds of dust practically billowing in our barrack room. It was mostly in such moments as these, when our eyes became bloodshot with the fine dust, our throats parched, and I suppose our reason a little obtuse, that we fell into the common practice of trying to figure out just how in the world we would find our way out of this little man-made hell. Why were we here? What had happened to us? Was this the America we knew, had known?" They all asked the same question. "Why," wrote Kiyoshi Hamanaka, "why did it have to be me? What did I do to deserve this? What rhyme or reason is there? I don't know why. . . . I guess I'll never know all the reasons, all the causes."

Gordon Hirabayashi, who refused to comply with the order for evacuation, wrote some interesting reflections in jail. "Sometimes," he wrote, "I think about evacuation and its various implications. The reaction is usually one of deep disappointment. At other times I am overcome with callousness and think, 'If I were only born of Caucasian parents. . . .' Yet I am quite aware that these feelings will not achieve the things which I desire. I try to understand why it has happened.

"Why? Why? . . . Lin Yutang once wrote: 'The causality of events is such that every little happening is conditioned by a thousand antecedents.' This evacuation, then, came as a result of the various experiences of the various persons who encouraged it, perhaps. Some may have learned race prejudice in their homes; others may have had unpleasant experiences with the Japanese; still others learned to consider that business came first; then there are many who have lost on the battle front close relatives. Add to these the things which whip up hysteria. Could these and a few other incidents have been some of the 'antecedents'? Could I through thoughtfulness and study

come to understand some of these actions and thereby not only learn the why of it but also get an insight into how to overcome it? It seems to me that a lot of these little things have turned out to be significant things."

II

No sooner had the evacuees become partially adjusted to life in an assembly center (usually a fair-ground or race-track or pavilion converted overnight into a city accommodating thousands of people), than they were moved again. This time they were moved from California to center-cities that had been hastily built in the inter-mountain "wilderness" areas, in Utah, in Idaho, in Wyoming, in Arizona, in Colorado. Most of the evacuees, needless to say, had never been outside the West Coast states in their lives.

"One afternoon," writes a youngster, "I saw on the bulletin board a note saying we were going to Utah." Again the rush to get suitcases packed; to be checked and counted; to bid farewell to friends; to get children dressed, tagged, and in their places. "There were miles and miles of desert, sagebrush, and mountains," writes one Nisei; and "then we came to Delta, Utah, where soldiers put us on the busses for Topaz. We traveled a long time. And then some barracks came in sight. We came closer and saw some people. Most of the people were sort of dark. We then heard music which was off tune a bit and we learned later that it was played by the welcome band. We finally got out. As I stepped on the ground, the dust came up in my face. This was Topaz! We had a hard time to find our home for the barracks were all alike. Topaz looked so big, so enormous to us. It made me feel like an ant. The dust gets in our hair. Every place we go we cannot escape the dust. Inside of our houses, in the laundry, in the latrines, in the messhalls, dust and

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more dust, dust everywhere. . . . I wonder who found this desert and why they put us in a place like this. . . .”

“Sometimes I wonder,” writes another young Nisei, “how the garden in our home in San Francisco is coming along. Whether the plants withered and died and weeds cover the garden or the house was torn down and the sign that says, ‘Real Estate—call so and so on so and so street to buy this place,’ covers the front, while among the weeds which cover the lot bloom roses and violets. I wonder which is better—dying from lack of care or blooming among the weeds every year. Maybe someone moved into the house (although it isn’t very likely because the house is sort of old) and tended the garden with care and planted a victory garden among the flowers.” Those who left the centers for occasional visits, on special passes, to nearby towns and cities, felt like strangers in a world they had almost forgotten. “In the morning I woke up in our hotel room,” writes one youngster, “and it felt good to hear the horns of automobiles and everything you hear in the city. I thought, for a moment, I was back in San Francisco and the whole evacuation was just a dream, but it was not a dream and I was only visiting Salt Lake City for a few days.”

“It is exactly a year ago today,” writes Mrs. Mary Tsukamoto, “that we came to Arkansas. I remember we were tired but eager to get our first glimpse of our new home. Then, we saw the black rows of regimented, one story barracks surrounded by dust. I felt only tears and inarticulate words choked me. . . . Then, I remember the cold of our first winter, the fuel shortage! The Arkansas mud! We dug ditches, women and children too, to fix the paths in the blocks so that we no longer waded through the impossible mud. There were great lessons to be learned in every block, barrack, and apartment. None

of us were ever so closely confined. Doctors, scholars, wealthy business men, humble farmers, we were all thrown together, and for the first time forced to live closely and intimately with each other. Ugly traits were forced to the fore. We were unhappy. We were bitter. We were afraid. All these intensified our difficulty to make adjustments.”

III

Every center has had its “blowoff”—its “incident.” And in every center registration and segregation—to determine American loyalty—were major events.

“The darkest days since Pearl Harbor,” writes Mrs. Tsukamoto, “I remember now, to be those oppressive, stifling days of registration. We were afraid to breathe. There was a tenseness in the air. Bewilderment and confusion was at its height. People walked the roads, tears streaming down their troubled faces, silent and suffering. There were young people stunned and dazed. The little apartments were not big enough for the tremendous battle that waged in practically every room: between parents and children, between America and Japan, between those that were hurt and frustrated, but desperately trying to keep faith in America and those who were tired and old and hurt and disillusioned. Then, there was a strange hush, something was sure to snap. Then a few were attacked! We wanted to run away. There were rumors, gangs, prowlers. The outside world seemed hostile; we were falling apart within, with nowhere to turn! It is hard to believe that we are still living in the same camp. We all feel and look years older. We’ve had tears to shed every week through the spring and summer. Friends were leaving for freedom. The new friends we grew to admire and love. Then, too, there was the echo that followed registration. Over 1,600 from our camp left for Tule Lake. They were ridiculed, they were

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cowards and quitters, they were ungrateful to this country. No, not all, only a few out of that great number were disloyal. Many had been here for over forty years. Many had never been to Japan. They haven't seen the new terrible Japan. Many were going only because there were leaders that swayed their decision. Many were forfeiting the future of their American children. There were so many fine young people that suffered, more than we will ever know, because they could not break up the family. They sacrificed this time for their parents who had sacrificed all these years for their children. Then, there were a few courageous youth, a shining symbol of true loyalty and love for this country. They endured beatings, but they were determined. There are not a few who are remaining alone, not even of age, but certain that they belong to America, and America alone. So, they parted from their family, to start life alone. . . . I will never forget the children. There was one boy, 17, who did not want to accompany his family to Tule Lake. The truck came for the family. He refused to get on the truck. He walked behind it to the train. He hugged his favorite high school teacher and refused to let her go. Finally he said, 'I'm going to return, I am an American.' The train pulled out . . . how long is this nightmare to last?"

One old Issei bachelor, James Hatsuaki Wakasa, on April 11th, 1943, left his barrack at the Topaz camp, and started walking toward the barbed wire fence which surrounds the center. The soldier in the watch-tower ordered him to stop; but he kept right on walking toward the fence. He was unarmed, alone; he seemed in a daze. Again he was ordered to halt; but he seemed not to hear or to understand. He was shot and killed by the sentry. There are old bachelors like that in the centers; men who have been broken by a lifetime of hard labor, utterly indiffer-

ent to what goes on around them, insensitive to pleasure or pain, not caring what goes on, not minding what happens. . . .

IV

No two impressions of life in a relocation center, from the evacuee's point of view, would be the same. The centers themselves differ each from the other. Minidoka, in Idaho, Topaz, in Utah, and Granada, in Colorado—in the order named—are "the cream of the lot." It is difficult to select, from the material I have collected, documents that might be said to be typical of the reaction of the evacuees to center-life. I have, however, selected two, the first by a Nisei in the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming, who prefers to remain anonymous. It gives the "dark side" of the story. The other was written by a Nisei friend of mine, S. J. Oki. It refers to the Topaz center, in Utah, and is the most objective document of the kind that I have seen. First, then, the story from Wyoming—dated November 8th, 1942.

"As the first light breaks the darkness, the roosters of a concentration camp suddenly come to life. First one, then another, then a chorus of dishpans rattle and clatter the call to breakfast. It is partly clouded, and the deep pink in the Eastern sky suddenly gives way as the whole heavens blaze. The eyes are pulled up and up, above the drab barracks and the drab countryside, to this spectacle of the great Plains. The color dies as quickly as it had lived. For a moment the whole world is gray, and then the sun catches the snow on the mountains to the southeast.

"Inside the black barracks the people stir. Some groan and roll over. Others push back the covers and slip quickly into their clothes. Grabbing towel and toothbrush, they go outdoors where the bits of snow and ice crunch under their feet. 'Cold,' they say to one another, and

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hurry towards the warmth of the latrines. Soon they are lining up to get their breakfast: grapefruit, cold cereal, French toast, coffee.

"As the sunlight reaches the camp, a bell on one of the barracks starts ringing and the kids come down to school. Lacking a schoolhouse, they sit in barracks all day, many on benches without backs, sharing textbooks because there aren't enough to go around. The teachers try to get along under the primitive conditions, finding their classes noisy because the partitions separating the rooms are flimsy and don't go up to the roof.

"Over in the Administration Building the block administrators get together for their daily meeting. Appointed by the WRA, this group is all-Nisei. It carries out the minor functions of government, takes the complaints of the people to the Administration. Like any governing body that doesn't have much power, its members sit and smoke and appoint committees. The Issei, who are not eligible to be block administrators, serve on a block council. And the people laugh, and call the block administrators stooges and the block council blockheads, for they know who really runs the government.

"Out in a corridor two Caucasian members of the Administration talk with each other about the colonists. Unlike the Army which ordered the evacuation, most of the WRA staff want to see the Japanese really relocated. One of these men is from Washington and tells how well former colonists who have gone out under student relocation have fared. He hopes the WRA will work on public opinion so that more and more colonists can go out. And the Administrators are tall, clean-cut Caucasians who are rather embarrassed because they know as well as any one the difference between voluntary partnership and coercion.

"And two of the people overhear a

snatch of their conversation as they pass, and one mutters: 'Colonists! I wonder if they call tigers pussy cats?'

"As the morning goes on, the sun becomes warmer and now it falls full on the ground which forms the streets and the spaces between the barracks. The puddles of water which have been frozen hard all night long begin to melt. When a boot lands on them, they crack and break, and muddy water spurts up over the toe of the boot. Then the millions of little frozen water particles in the earth that had been holding the ground firm and hard, these too begin to melt, and the ground softens. As the sun continues to shine on it and the people to walk over it, it becomes muddy. The people's feet get wet and dirty whenever they step outside a building.

"Two Nisei girls walking across the camp jump and slide in the mud, and try to keep in the shade of the barracks where the ground is still firm. They are social workers. Social workers in a place like this? What does a social worker do to prevent juvenile delinquency when kids are suddenly jerked from normal life to this? Recreation? When there's no item in the budget for recreational material and the recreation halls are even used as offices? Education? When they promise us school buildings and good equipment and we don't get them? Worthwhile work? When the majority of the jobs they give us are so meaningless that most of the kids act as if they were doing time?

"How can you teach democracy in a concentration camp? Or praise American labor standards where people get \$4 for a 44-hour week, and nothing for overtime? Or talk about racial equality when the Caucasians on the WRA staff are setting up a whole Jim Crow system of their own? Lookit these little boys. They used to worship football players. Remember when you were a little kid, how every little boy had a hero? Now they follow the toughest

gang leaders, and the gangs get tougher and fight one another and steal lumber. New gangs are formed, and they look at the girls more often. . . . We're not individuals here, but cogs that eat and sleep and work and live all alike. Lookit that mother—she used to be the core of her family, providing the meals, training her children, those little things that build a family unity. Now other people throw food at us, the kids no longer eat with the parents, but learn their manners from the roughnecks, run wild most of the time.

"I read in a paper how a minister said we oughta be satisfied because we are being well-fed and housed and given a chance to work. Is that all living means to that guy? Is life just getting your belly filled and a hoe put in your hands? Betcha that same fellow talks a lot about liberty and spiritual values when he's thinking about Hitler. . . .

"The people have learned to laugh at the things that hurt them most. Whenever anyone mentions that they may stay here permanently, 'like Indians on a reservation,' everyone always laughs. But they do not think the subject of Indian reservations is funny. . . . Then there's the story about the Caucasian history teacher who told her class: 'Today we will study the Constitution.' And the class laughed and giggled so that they never did.

"And the people who have been hurt make cracks about the number of Jews on the WRA staff, and they make disparaging remarks about Negroes, and point to the economic degradation of the Mexicans. . . .

"It is Hallowe'en evening, and across the camp are many parties. In the mess-halls gay streamers enliven the walls, and the people crowd together as the orchestra comes in. Ten Nisei boys, each wearing a red-and-black checked flannel shirt, and a girl at the piano, start to play remarkably good music. But no one dances. Finally

a boy says to a girl: 'Hell! Let's dance!' The ice is broken, and the floor is suddenly jammed with couples dancing or watching a hot jitterbug exhibition. People laugh and joke and a boy says to a girl he is dancing with: 'I almost forgot where I am!' 'I never do,' the girl replies, as the smile goes from her face.

"What will these camps produce? Out of them can come great leaders and prophets. Men and women of great faith and great patience, blazing new paths in overcoming racial prejudice. Will hardship burn and temper their faith and make it strong?

"The people do not know. In one of the barracks, a late bull session is going on around the warm stove. 'It's too easy,' says one boy. 'We get food, there's no rent to pay, the routine is deadening. Everything leads to a degenerative life instead of an invigorating one. Everyone is grabbing for himself. We grab the coal, grab bits of wood lying around, grab for clothing allotments, grab our food. No wonder the little kids are getting so that they do it too, and think only of themselves. No wonder we're apathetic and ingrown.'

"The people walk quickly home through the sharp cold of the night. The ground is harder under their feet along the brightly-lighted streets and alleys. From a thousand chimneys the harsh coal smoke tries to rise, curls under the weight of the cold air, and settles like a blanket close to the ground. A train whistle sounds in the darkness. Music comes from a guard tower where a bored soldier listens to the radio. From the floodlights an arc of light surrounds the camp."

From Topaz, S. J. Oki, a long-time friend, wrote me: "Objectively, and on the whole, life in a relocation center is not unbearable. There are dust-storms and mud. Housing is inadequate, with families of six living in single rooms in many cases.

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Food is below the standard set for prisoners of war. In some of the camps hospitals are at times understaffed and supplies meager, as in many ordinary communities. Yet while Mr. Ata, former San Francisco importer, complains of the low quality of the food, Mrs. Baito, widow of a San Joaquin farmer, is grateful for what the United States government is doing to make life as comfortable as possible for the evacuees. In short, no one is pampered and at the same time no one is starving or sick because of neglect on the part of the War Relocation Authority.

"What is not so bearable lies much deeper than the physical make-up of a center. It is seen in the face of Mr. Yokida, 65, a Montebello farmer; . . . of Mrs. Wata, 50, a grocer's widow from Long Beach; . . . of little John Zendo, 9, son of an Oakland restaurant owner; . . . of Mary Uchido, former sophomore from UCLA and the daughter of a Little Tokyo merchant; . . . of Sus Tana, young Kibei who had been an employee in a vegetable stand in Hollywood.

"Their faces look bewildered as they stare at the barbed-wire fences and sentry towers that surround the camp. Their eyes ask: Why? Why? What is all this?

"Kats Ento, serious-looking ex-farmer from Norwalk, has made up his mind. He says: 'I am an American citizen. I was born and brought up in California. I have never been outside the United States, and I don't know Japan or what Japan stands for. But because my parents weren't considerate enough to give me blue eyes, reddish hair, and a high nose, I am here, in camp, interned without the formality of a charge, to say nothing of a trial. Does the Constitution say that only white men are created equal? Put me down as disloyal, if you will, but I'm going where I won't have to live the rest of my life on the wrong side of the tracks just because my face is yellow. Keep me in camp for

the duration. I will find my future in the Orient.'

"Mrs. Jones, elementary school teacher appointed by the WRA, sighs as she looks towards the little children in shabby but clean clothes. 'To be frank with you, it embarrasses me to teach them the flag salute. Is our nation indivisible? Does it stand for justice for all? Those questions come up in my mind constantly.'

"Mr. Yokida, technically an enemy alien after forty years' continuous residence in California, appears tired. 'For forty years I worked in central and southern California. I remember when Los Angeles was only a small town compared to San Francisco. This country never gave me citizenship, but I never went back to Japan and I have no interests there. The evacuation has worked a hardship on me and my family, but I suppose in time of war you have to stand for a lot of hardships. Don't ask me what I think of Japan or about the incident at Pearl Harbor. I don't know. What I know is that this is my country, and I have given my only son to its army. I wrote him just the other day, telling him to obey his commander-in-chief without reserve. I have worked as long as anyone and I am satisfied. The only thing I think about is my son. I hope that he will make good in the army. I hope that he will come back to me as a captain, at least.' . . .

"Sus Tana, 32, is a volunteer for the special Japanese American combat team. He smiles broadly and seems jolly, but his dark eyebrows betray an uneasiness which is concealed somewhat behind his sunburned forehead. 'I am a Kibei and a Young Democrat. I lived and worked in Los Angeles nine years after my return from Japan. I never made over a hundred dollars a month, mostly seventy-five to eighty, and I could never save enough money to buy anything. So when evacuation came, I had nothing to lose. I do miss

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my friends among the Young Democrats, though. They were such a fine bunch. You forgot you were a Jap when you were with them; you were just an American fighting for the President and the New Deal. I do wish I could be back there now. Maybe I could get a defense job and do what I can. But I am glad that we are going to have a combat unit. Maybe I can show the reactionaries in California that a Japanese American can be just as good a soldier as any American—if not better.”

V

Beginning in the fall of 1942, hundreds and later thousands of evacuees were released, on seasonal leaves, to relieve the manpower shortage in agriculture, particularly in the sugar-beet areas of the inter-mountain west. The experience represented, for the evacuees involved, their first taste of “freedom,” in long months—although they were subject to certain restrictions. “I can’t make much money,” writes one sugar-beet worker, “but the idea of being a ‘free’ man and eating the things you like—the way you like them—is mighty fine.” While they were paid the prevailing wages for the different types of work involved, the evacuees nevertheless realized that they were in effect on parole. “We are aware,” writes one, “that we must not do or say anything or go anywhere that might incite antagonism. Therefore we are avoiding public places, such as restaurants, bowling alleys, and theatres. We are avoiding being obvious. For our responsibility is to pave the way for those to come.” The universal praise that they evoked from employers; the fact that no “incidents” resulted; and that the seasonal-leave program involved 15,000 or 16,000 evacuees, is a tribute to their ability to make themselves inconspicuous and to their tact and good judgment.

I have before me a stack of reports, written by evacuees, about their experiences

while on seasonal leaves. They are written from beet fields, from potato fields, from carrot fields, from turkey-picking farms, and from many types of camps. They describe very bad working conditions, and good working conditions. The variety of impressions encountered makes generalization impossible. Many letters testify to the kindness of the Mormon people in Utah. “The people are very friendly,” writes one evacuee. “They seem to be our kind of people.” “The people are very polite and amiable,” writes another (also from Utah); “for the first time in a long while I had a sense of freedom. To walk and to look at the streets of an American town—that was quite a feeling.” In the main, I believe the seasonal-leave program built up, in most of the evacuees, a sense of self-confidence; it made them feel, once again, part of America. It encouraged thousands of them to apply for permanent leaves.

Obviously, working in the sugar beet fields is no lark. “Our living quarters,” writes one evacuee, “are very primitive; oil-lamp, wood-burning stove, no bath or shower, an old bed with hay mattress and a broken leg; and a stinking outhouse filled with dried hay.” Working in the frosty mornings, in the heat of mid-day, in the whipping winds of evening that tear across the inter-mountain flatlands, they managed to average not more than \$3.00 to \$4.50 a day. But, to most of them, the experience seems to have been a profound relief from the monotony of life in a relocation center. “As we got up this chilly morning,” writes one evacuee, “we noticed the quiet, serene atmosphere of this valley community. A typical rural community with large barns stacked high with golden hay. The valley is bounded on all sides by high green hills as though to shelter it from the outside world. Our little shack is surrounded by tall poplars and cedars with leaves turning yellow in the autumn

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sun. The hills on the east are tinted by yellowing leaves of the Box Elder, reddening leaves of the Maple, and the golden colors of the Sarsaparilla. As we three slowly hiked toward the fields, countless grasshoppers sprayed the ground before us. We followed the winding irrigation canal, just day-dreaming along. My mind is much clearer and my appetite has grown quite ravenous. I give my personal recommendation that this valley will cure nervous breakdowns and other mental ailments that center people are susceptible to or have incurred through long confinement and boredom." There is no doubt but that the psychological success of the seasonal-leave program, as well as its admitted economic success, encouraged WRA to go forward with the program for permanent relocation.

VI

While generally endorsing the program of WRA and commending its policies, the evacuees as a group feel the relocation experience itself is irredeemably bad. Even those who, for a variety of reasons, are opposed to individual relocation outside the centers (for the duration of the war), echo the same sentiments about the centers. "In the relocation centers," writes Franklyn Sugiyama, "the people are like fish dynamited—they are helplessly stunned, floating belly up on the stream of life." "The most terrible factor concerning camp life," writes Frank Watanabe, "is the havoc this uneasy, restricted and enclosed life is working upon the young people's character and personality. Many of the youngsters are growing up in this environment knowing very little about the outside. Consequently, their ideas, their outlook upon life have changed greatly. Many are bitter towards the outside society while others are just indifferent. It's just not an ordinary healthy environment. Parent-child relationships are broken down in

many cases. Discipline is neglected because the parents in many cases have lost faith in themselves as well as in this country. Initiative, individual assurance and the will to succeed have been lost in the desert sands just as water evaporates in its intense heat. Even educated men and women in a few cases have gotten this 'devil-may-care' attitude and it sure hasn't helped matters very much."

Those who have remained in the centers are becoming over-cautious; more timid; highly race conscious. Their world tends to grow smaller, not larger; and it was a small airless world to begin with. They lose perspective; they become Rip Van Winkles, out of touch with the world, with the nation, with the people. "The shock that we sustained," writes Hanna Kozasa, "and the bitterness that overwhelmed us was most trying. The barbed wire fences, the armed sentries, the observation towers, increased our sense of frustration to the point that many have not been able to regain a proper perspective. The most alarming aspect of life in the centers is the demoralization it is working in the people. It is sapping their initiative in a frightening manner. The forced labor, with its low pay, indecent housing, inadequate food, the insecurity of their position in a postwar America, have contributed to a deterioration of family life that is beginning to show in a sharply increased juvenile delinquency—this among a people that had the lowest crime rate of any group in the United States." "Evacuation," writes Howard Imazeki, "distorted the life philosophy of the Japanese Americans and their parents. It completely warped the perspective of the majority of the Nisei in its earlier stage. They are, however, slowly recovering from this initial impact." "The wounds both physical and spiritual," writes an Issei woman, "caused by the tragic evacuation have begun to heal. Some are beginning to have

vision enough to think about the future."

As the relocation program itself has moved forward, more and more of the evacuees (a clear majority of the Nisei) are inclined to regard evacuation itself as "past history." Letter after letter speaks of "evacuation as a thing of the past." Had it not been for the prompt adoption by WRA of the present release or relocation program, I am convinced that little or nothing could have been salvaged from the program itself. The moment the possibility of relocation was offered the evacuees, "the tragedy of evacuation" began to recede. If WRA is permitted to continue this program, evacuation will soon become merely a memory for most of the evacuees. One observation should, however, be made on this score: not more than one per cent of the evacuees believe or have ever believed that evacuation was ordered as a matter of military necessity or that it was, in fact, justified. With scarcely a single exception, the Nisei believe that evacuation was brought about by race-bigots in California and that they were singled out for removal by reason of the color of their skins and the slant of their eyes. This is a factor which must be taken into account in any appraisal of the entire program. In the eyes of the evacuees, however, as expressed by Joe Koide, "the very boldness with which the American government has endeavored to rectify this wrong *while the war is still going on* is a tribute to American democracy." More is involved in the relocation program than the economic and social rehabilitation of 100,000 people. It is equally important to see that they are psychologically rehabilitated and that their somewhat shaken faith in American democracy is fully restored.

VII

Today most of the talk in the centers is about "relocation." "Relocation," as one

evacuee phrases it, "is in the air." For most of them, the past year has been largely given over to a debate: to relocate or not to relocate, but now, thousands are preparing to leave. They are making plans for their return to normal society; for their return, as they phrase it, "back to America." They are quite clear-headed about the risks they will run; about the unforeseeable factors involved. They are packing their belongings, once again, for still another phase in this curious cross-country trek. You are likely to see them on the trains: inclined to be shy, highly self-conscious, and endeavoring to "make themselves inconspicuous." The first leg of the journey, they report, is the most trying. It is that initial experience on the train that they fear most. Rather to their astonishment, they quickly discover that few questions are asked; few incidents arise; few people stare. Soon they begin to feel, as one of them writes, "like a human being. You begin to forget that you are of Japanese ancestry, or any other ancestry, and remember only that you are an American." They are stepping from trains and buses, throughout America, "leaving the dust of relocation centers behind," as Larry Tajiri writes, "and returning to the broad boulevards, the movie palaces and the skyscrapers of America. From Topaz and Minidoka, from Rivers and Poston, from Heart Mountain and Granada, from the California and Arizona camps, from all the giant 'Little Tokyos' of war relocation, the exiles of evacuation are returning to the free lives of ordinary Americans."

They are not coming back into the stream of American life with any unseen chips on their shoulders; nor are they harboring any grudges against their fellow Americans. Most of them sincerely want to forget about the entire experience of evacuation. All they ask, as George Yasukochi writes, "is to be treated as individuals—as fellow Americans and not as prob-

lem children to be cried over and pitied. They are willing to be judged on individual merit—whether the Japanese American unit fighting on Italian terrain covers itself with glory, or whether the Tule Lake segregants riot in shame—for as individuals they are then judged on what they are. They wish to be grouped with Tojo no more than LaGuardia would with Mussolini. Unfortunately, a large number of Americans simply cannot digest the idea that a person with dissimilar physical characteristics may speak perfect English, possess American ideologies and yearnings, and be an ordinary human being.” They are not inclined to regard themselves self-piteously as “victims of injustice.” “Evacuation,” writes Eddie Shimano, “is no more important than the poll tax in its denial of American rights. Only the theatrical suddenness and the immediate personal tragedies of it, together with the fact that it was the Federal Government which decreed it, plus its relation to the war, make it seem so important. The denial of Constitutional rights in the practice of the poll tax affects more American citizens than did the evacuation.”

“The Nisei,” to quote again from a letter by George Yasukochi, “are ahead of their first generation parents in American ways and thought and speech. And even in wartime America, the Nisei face more favorable public opinion than their parents did three decades ago, as far as the country East of the Sierras is concerned. So long as the Nisei do not attempt to entrench themselves economically in conspicuous fashion, they will avoid the treacherous attacks of jealous reactionary groups. The Nisei thus must forge ahead as individuals rather than as a group so that they will be assimilated into the main stream of American society—continuing to offer whatever cultural gifts and understanding they can transmit from the Oriental to the Occidental civilization. . . .

“An imperative ‘must’ for the Nisei is to realize that their own problem is but a back scratch in the great problem of American democracy—to unite peaceably all people of different races, backgrounds, creeds, and ideologies in a progressive society. The Nisei should give full support to all publications and all organizations working on behalf of democracy—political, social, and economic—for all. They must fight the insidious press that tries to use them as scapegoats, as they will protest the grossly unfair action of the Navy in closing educational institutions to the Nisei while its left hand recruits the same Nisei to teach language to its cadets in those institutions. But they must defend with equal vigor attacks upon the rights of the Negroes, Catholics, or labor. The complacent pleasures of their own society are not to serve as sands into which the Nisei may duck their heads ostrich-like, nor is the sight of their own problem to blind them into thinking the universe revolves about them. The Nisei, like everyone else in the country today, must be thinking how to promote the democratic well-being of America.”

“Several months ago,” writes Robert Hosokawa from Independence, Missouri, “my wife and I were permitted to leave a WRA center and to pursue the normal life with freedom and responsibility which waited beyond the barbed wire and watch-towers of the mono-racial wartime community. We have settled in a suburban community close to one of the great Midwest cities. We have tried to be honest and diligent. We have tried to carry our loads as Americans, who want foremost to help win the war. We have made friends and have established ourselves fairly well.

“We are hopeful of the future and we will jealously fight for the perpetuation of true American ideals, opposing all the pseudo-democrats. During the months of confinement, our minds lived in the fu-

THE NISEI SPEAK

ture—not in the past—hoping, planning, dreaming, and thinking. The freedom we had always taken for granted—as most Americans still do—began to take on deep meaning when we had been deprived of it. There were times when we began to lose faith in ourselves and our ability to take it. Life in the camps was not easy. It was inadequate and morale-killing. But never in those months did we lose faith in America. Sometimes we were bitterly disappointed and enraged when we read the lies, distortions, and testimony of un-American politicians and false patriots.

“If the government gives genuine backing to make a success of the plan for widespread resettlement, then the heartaches, losses and hardships will be partly compensated. If this fails, if Americans with Japanese faces are cast aside as unassimilables, as creatures to be shipped across to the land of their ancestors, despite their citizenship, then American democracy may as well throw in the towel. For what happens to one minority group will happen to another and the four freedoms will be enjoyed by only those powerful enough to keep them from the others. Now the Nisei are knocking at the door, asking to be admitted.”

VIII

“February 4, 1943

“Secretary of War Stimson
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Stimson:

“I know you are a very busy man and I hate to bother you like this when you are busy in more important matters.

“This is just a simple plea that comes from within my heart, crying for someone to listen.

“I was very happy when I read your announcement that Nisei Americans would be given a chance to volunteer for active combat duty. But at the same time

I was sad—sad because under your present laws I am an enemy alien. I am a 22-year old boy, American in thought, American in act, as American as any other citizen. I was born in Japan. My parents brought me to America when I was only two years old. Since coming to America as an infant, my whole life was spent in New Mexico. My only friends were Caucasian boys.

“At Pearl Harbor, my pal Curly Mopins was killed outright without a chance to fight back when the Japanese planes swooped down in a treacherous attack. And Dickie Harrell and other boys from my home town came back maimed for life. Then more of my classmates volunteered—Bud Henderson, Bob and Jack Aldridge, and many others; they were last heard of as missing in the Philippines. It tears my heart out to think that I could not avenge their deaths.

“The law of this country bars me from citizenship—because I am an Oriental—because my skin is yellow. This is not a good law and bad laws could be changed.

“But this is not what I want to bring up at this time. As you well know, this is a people’s war. The fate of the free people all over the world hangs in the balance. I only ask that I be given a chance to fight to preserve the principles that I have been brought up on and which I will not sacrifice at any cost. Please give me a chance to serve in your armed forces.

“In volunteering for active combat duty, my conscience will be clear and I can proudly say to myself that I wasn’t sitting around, doing nothing when the fate of the free people was at stake.

“Any of my Caucasian friends would vouch for my loyalty and sincerity. Even now some of them may be sleeping an eternal sleep in a lonely grave far away from home, dying for the principles they loved and sincerely believed.

“I am not asking for any favors or sympathy. I only ask that I be given a chance

COMMON GROUND

—a chance to enlist for active combat duty. How can a democratic nation allow a technicality of birthplace to stand in the way when the nation is fighting . . . to preserve the rights of free men?

“The high governmental officials have oftentimes stated that this is a people’s struggle—regardless of race or color. Could it be a people’s struggle if you bar a person who sincerely believes in the very principles we are all fighting for from taking part?

“I beg you to take my plea and give it your careful consideration.

“I have also sent a copy of this same letter to President Roosevelt in hopes that some action will be taken in my case.

“Sincerely,

HENRY H. EBIHARA
Topaz, Utah.”

This is a condensation of a chapter in Carey McWilliams’ forthcoming book on the evacuation and relocation of Japanese Americans, to be published in the Fall by Little, Brown for the Institute of Pacific Relations.

THE BRAGGART

MELVIN B. TOLSON

*His blond magnificence keyed his vanity,
As snowdrifts moored us at the cabined hearth.
His dog-eat-dog ethics appalled, and we
Were sea fish caught within the damning garth.*

*“The eagle kings the realm of birds,” he said;
“The lion monarchs the jungle; the world of trees
Kneels to the redwood; Everest’s imperial head
Outdazzles the peaks; the Pacific queens the seas.*

*“Elite and mongrel—that is Nature’s plan,
A ladder-scheme and not a level-hood.
The Nordic is the zenith rung of Man,
And envy bodes the lesser breeds no good.”*

*The big game hunter said, “I saw a horde
Of ants unflesh a lion as he roared.”*

Melvin B. Tolson is on the faculty of Wiley College, Marshall, Texas. Dodd Mead will bring out his first volume of poetry in August under the title *Rendezvous With America*, in which “The Braggart” as well as earlier poems in CG will appear.

SNOWFALL

D'ARCY McNICKLE

THE INDIAN sitting in the chair was old, but not so old that he wind-tottered. He was dry fiber, with stooped shoulders. His hair, colored like the ash of a burnt-out log, hung in side braids with the ends coiled neatly in red felt. His blue serge suit, buttonless and baggy, had traveled a long way from its lower Broadway fabricator. Slit eyes that twinkled, bland smile. This was Henry Jim.

He was saying something about selling a team of horses. Something as simple as that.

The Indian agent stirred out of his pre-occupation. His smile, which broke slowly on his heavy face, had a quality of friendliness, a kind of enduring tolerance. He had been barely conscious of the Indian's approach, of his noiseless gliding toward the chair at the left of the desk. Now he pushed aside the papers on his desk top and waited for the Indian to speak again.

"My team, the big bay ones." The old man's voice was thin and wavering, but not unpleasant.

"The big—You mean your team?"

"Eh. The team."

"What then? Are they sick?"

"No. Not sick. I want to sell."

The spreading smile receded. The agent's gray eyes glinted to an opening uncertainty.

"It's a good team, Henry. You got lots of horses, ponies, cow horses. Good enough. Why don't you sell some of them? Save the team."

Henry waved it aside. "Everybody got that kind of horses. Nobody will pay money for that kind."

No denying that. The man behind the desk straightened out of his relaxed position and regarded the papers before him. A trifling frown gathered his eyebrows



nearer. He was forced to express his real concern.

"Let's talk about this, Henry. Here on Two Buttes Reservation—" his gesturing hand swept toward a window view of roll-

ing hills, scrub-timbered, well-grassed, and of a broad valley sweeping northward—"you're the best rancher we have. Most years white men have to buy hay from you. They say, 'Henry, how is it you got hay to sell when ours is gone?' They respect you for it. Isn't that so? Now you want to sell your team, a fine team. I helped you pick them out. How will you get your haying done? Cow ponies are no good for that."

Henry Jim ignored the question. "I want to pay my debts."

"Pay your debts?" It sounded more and more irrational, quite unlike Henry Jim. The government man's frown furrowed deeper. "Your debts are small. Nobody is looking for you to run off. It's August already. Almost fall. Pay your debts when you sell some hay. Or if you want to borrow a little cash—"

The suggestion was waved aside.

The old man was rising to his feet, a little shakily, but with the strength of a settled spirit. He wanted no further talk. He was distracted, remote. He had not come to the office to be humored. One was always missing those signals.

The warm August afternoon pressed in and made the room more stifling than it had been. Voices speaking beyond the office wall emphasized the silence that followed the broken thread of speech.

The agent rose with the old man, showing his uncertainty by getting his feet entangled in the spread legs of his swivel chair and almost falling. He got to the door just as Henry Jim stood ready to open it.

The Indian paused and turned part way round to face his agent. His dark eyes, looking rather watery, seemed not to focus but to look at far things. Obviously he was addressing the agent, but only his words showed it. His thought was somewhere beyond.

"When the time comes, when snow

flies, I will send for you. I will tell you then."

"Yes, Henry. Of course. Send for me and I will come any time."

It was a relief to have something to say. The Indian had moved through the door and out into the strong August sunlight before the agent could think of asking what the Indian meant. What was it he wanted to talk about that he couldn't mention now?

Ephraim Morse stood looking across the agency compound. An Indian superintendent had to be a busybody. That was the worst part of the job. If one of his wards came wanting to sell a team of horses to pay his debts, the superintendent was expected to look into it. "Now, now," he must say, "why do you want to do that? If you knew better, if you knew as much as I do, you wouldn't. Take my word for it."

Always the matter of seeing to it that the Indians knew what they were doing. And always, too, the sense of working against time, of time looking over your shoulder, nudging you. Someone would be waiting, not simply for a letter from Washington with instruction on procedure, but for a chance to live or to bury the dead. Always someone waiting. Time looking over your shoulder.

"We don't just grow old," Ephraim Morse would tell his wife, explaining himself and his brothers in service. "We pass through ten lifetimes. We become a walking tomb of people who died waiting for a short word from us, when we had to wait on somebody else. We bury them, then carry them with us." And his wife would nod an assent that was at once silent and remote.

The August days ran on, searing the leaves of the cottonwood trees to crispness. The reservation roads were piled deep in yellow dust, which every puff of hot wind tossed high against the horizon

SNOWFALL

of mountains. Wheat harvesters rolled their heaped-up golden wagons across the stubble fields.

Then there was a morning in September—the twenty-second, Ephraim Morse noted when his secretary flipped over the page of his calendar pad—which began in sunshine, a sort of lukewarm sunshine, with a strengthening wind blowing out of the northwest. He left his office in mid-morning to inspect some repairs being made on the horse barn over at the edge of the compound. He noted then that the wind had piled windrows of clouds all across the sky. The sun had paled until even the spot it had occupied went quite gray. The wind turned colder.

He was down at the barn talking to his carpenter when Henry Jim's forty-year old son, Aloysius, came across to meet him. The son was grave and halting, traits of countenance and manner that reminded one of the father. He did not call out or speak at once, just came up and halted.

"How is your father?" Morse asked, offering his hand.

The son, moccasin-footed, tipped his head upward until the straight-edge brim of his hat made a line with the topmost wave of the background mountains. He was squinting at the blowing clouds, looking for something which his eyes told him was not there.

"It is going to snow," he said in a flat voice that suggested utter lack of faith in his own words.

"Snow!" Morse exclaimed and looked to the sky in bewilderment. On the twenty-second of September? No. The wind would grow still stronger and blow the clouds away by noon. Or it would die down and there would be rain. A cold autumn rain. That was the best his weather sense could make of it.

"Maybe rain, Aloysius. But not snow."

Aloysius shifted his feet, looked from this to that, worried.

"My father said it would snow and asks you to come to see him."

Morse looked more sharply at Henry's son. He didn't know him well enough to judge this mood. Was it fear that showed in his eyes?

"Is he sick, then?"

Aloysius shrugged his heavy shoulders. The rawhide thong which passed from his hat and tied under his chin swayed its loose ends with the gesture.

"He sleeps a lot."

"Sleeps a lot?" Was that bad?

Aloysius did not expand on the statement.

"Tell me, Aloysius. What does your father want to talk about?"

To that there was no response, only a silent regard which Morse found baffling.

"And why does your father want to sell his horses? Will he quit farming?"

He might as well have saved his breath. Aloysius only shrugged.

Driving his bay-matched mares that September day, Morse wished he had stopped by his house to put on warmer clothing. The wind had a bite to it. It drew water to the eyes. If his wife knew he had gone off wearing only a summer coat—

As he neared the end of the five-mile drive and looked upward to where Henry Jim's ranch lay outspread on rising ground, he was forced to realize anew how well the old full-blood had caught the white man's idea. Not only were the fields fenced, but the barn and house lots were enclosed separately; there were gates in good repair and fastened shut. Machinery was sheltered. There was an order in it that went according to the book.

His smiling recognition was jarred suddenly. In the barn lot, looking toward the road on which he passed, was one of the mates of Henry Jim's team. He looked closely to verify his first impression. He was not mistaken. Only one horse was in

sight. The animal stood with its head up, evidently searching the wind for scent of the lost mate.

The inner cabin was something different, another world entirely. One faltered, letting the eyes adjust themselves to the gloom, being uncertainly aware of people sitting in silence back against the walls.

Henry Jim lay fully clothed on top of the bed, and his eyes, slowly following the agent, seemed to be the only part of him still muscled. He looked tired. Morse sat down, trying to keep his weight off of the roundless, spread-legged chair beside the bed. It was some time before he spoke.

"When men get our age they need rest once in a while. That's what it is. Not sick, Henry. Just a rest."

It was an amiable thing to say, so Morse thought, but he could not tell whether Henry Jim found it so.

One never knew, of course, what effect one's words had. These old fellows had a kind of courtesy which would not permit them, even if they liked you, to tell you what they thought of you. They looked at you through eyes which never gave anything away.

Morse tried to explain in his own thoughts what it was that his senses prickled to there in the cabin and which marked it off from the world outside. It was not one man's past, not one race's, but mankind's, it seemed. That was the sense of it. Was it the gloomy cabin which made him think so? And those confusing, old-as-earth smells? It seemed to be, in a moment's summary, history before there was history. A fragment split off from Asia, cradle of humankind—didn't someone say so? Or was this nonsense?

He couldn't tell by looking at Henry Jim, whose staring eyes had come to rest on Morse's face.

"A few days in bed and you'll feel better. Men our age need rest." He tried to make the silence sit more easily.

And then Henry Jim spoke, with unexpected clarity.

"Now it is going to snow," he said. Just that.

Morse faltered, almost agreeing before his rational mind impeded him.

"Snow? In September, Henry?"

The old man ignored the question.

"I have to wait until it starts before I can talk to you."

The agent reared back, irritated, yet willing to be patient. He had learned that much in twenty years.

"I try to follow you, Henry. My thought tries to go along, and then it stops. What is it you want to talk about?"

It was a stupid question but Henry did not reject it. He even smiled, and let it go at that.

In a kind of helpless gesture, Morse turned to the others to learn what they were thinking—to Aloysius, who had just come in; to Henry's old wife, toothless and sightless; to relatives of greater and lesser degree—all sitting motionless, eyes averted, merging in shadow. He would learn nothing from them.

"Snowfall won't be soon." He tried to stay casual.

"Yes. Quite soon." Henry turned his face away, as if withdrawing from the contest.

It was just at that point Morse got the intimation of finality which, until then, he had been missing. He was immediately apprehensive, and sat up straight in his chair. Now he really had to know what was going on.

"Henry, when your people see you sell your horses and quit farming—what will they do? Quit?"

That, he realized, was the special interest which had carried him at a fast trot from the Agency. It was a vital point. Because, after months of preparing field reports and receiving experts out from Washington, he had won approval of a

SNOWFALL

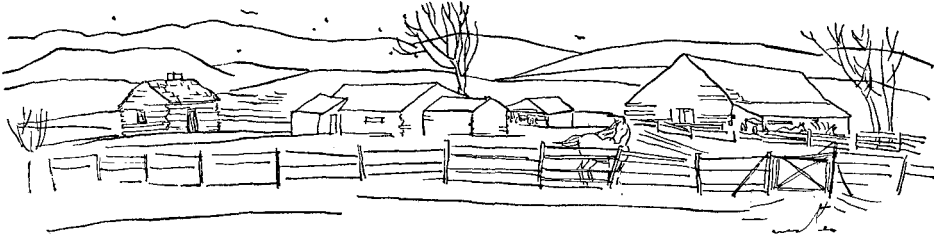
program of increased expenditure on farm equipment. An enlarged effort to make farmers out of Indians. And what now? If Henry Jim gave up, retired to a moody living in the past, would plows rot to rust all over the reservation? Was the old man renouncing the faith that was work horses and machinery and fenced-up acres?

Glancing earthward again, he reasoned. It never snowed in September—well, the Agency records said it didn't.

Aloysius was waiting outside, hands in pockets.

"What do you think—" Morse's question ended vaguely.

The forty-year old son turned and stared



The old Indian stirred at the question. With great effort, he rolled part way on his side and looked at Morse.

The heavy breathing began to sound like roaring wind in the deepening silence of the room. As his voice emerged, the roaring subsided.

"You think I will be here, maybe. You want me to work my horses. But I am only waiting for snowfall. Then—"

Morse's eyes opened wide. This was really alarming. There was meaning in Henry Jim's words which had to be taken into account. This talk about snow obscured the real matter.

"I have to understand, Henry, if you want me to help. I have to know. Why did you sell just one horse?"

Henry Jim turned his head away.

"I can't talk about that now. When the snow begins to fall, you come. I will explain."

The agent knew when to stop and when to smile. He knew when talking had become useless. He rose uncertainly.

Stepping through the low doorway, Morse looked skyward and saw heavy clouds, looking as if they had been compressed into a solid. The wind was slackening.

toward the creek-and-willow-bordered pasture. Horses were down there, cow ponies, their tails flying in the cold wind. Their heads were up, uncertainly, as if they too sensed an unseasonableness.

"When it snows, you come, eh? He wants to say something."

"Say what?"

A shoulder shrug. What Morse should have expected. You could go so far, and then that shrug. In twenty years, from Sioux to Apache, and now among these mountain people, these root diggers, the gesture had not changed.

How many times had he gone lanternless into the nebulous world of Indian pattern, grasping at the airy substance of mythical ideas, looking for himself among the shadows.

"They are not like us," he told his wife, Clarisse, that night, for what to her must have seemed like the thousandth time. "The earth is more real to them—much. They're barely separated from it—each generation is born back to it, while we get farther away all the time. We lose touch with our beginning, our senses get thick-skinned. But they are everlastingly sensitive. We call them fatalists, but perhaps their fatalism is hidden knowledge."

COMMON GROUND

In dawn chilliness Morse heard his wife exclaiming, childishly surprised—"Why, Ephraim! It's snowing! I can't believe it!"

Morse thrust his head out of the bed-covers. What had he to do with snow? What had he dreamt—

His wife was up, raising higher a half-raised window shade.

"See! It's just begun. There's hardly any on the ground. It melts as fast as it lights."

By the time she turned from the window, wondering whether her husband would plunge outward into the day, he was on his way.

The five-mile drive was a journey into a fabulous land. It snowed sparsely and drearily, the sky hanging low and dark

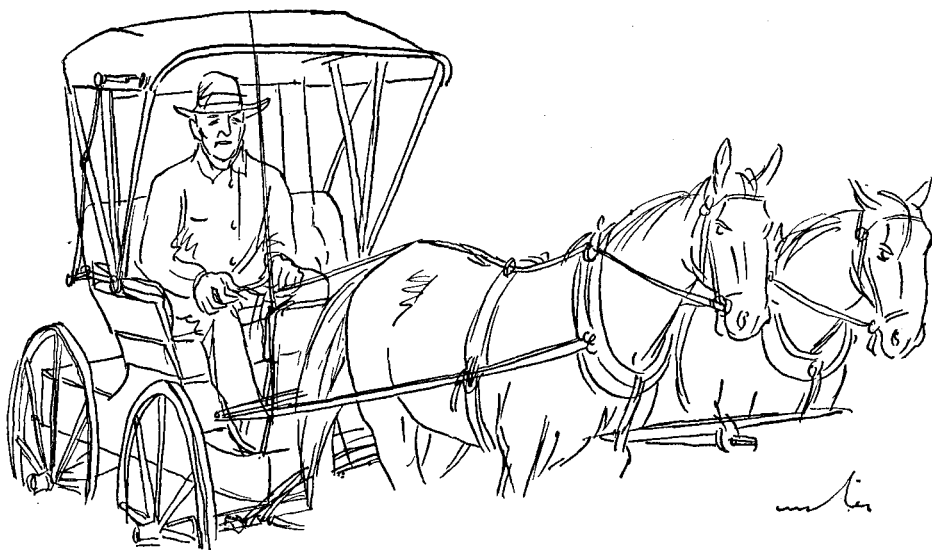
one have to be as uncomplicated as Henry Jim to feel the flow of the inward current?

Long before he reached the end of the drive, he knew what Henry Jim had been talking about. It was even possible, he thought, looking back, that he had understood even on that August afternoon, but had been too rational to admit it.

Henry Jim lay listlessly abed, fully clothed in the serge suit from lower Broadway, New York City.

There were the same hushed, bunched forms in the twilight cabin. Morse's entering caused no stir. He stepped cautiously toward the bedside, found the spraddle-legged chair on which he had rested uneasily the day before.

The old fellow's eyes were closed and



and wet. Prophecy lay in just such witch's weather, not in sunshine and bird song. What was the world? What one held in hand, used, wore on one's body? Was it the power one extracted from machinery, from electrical impulse, from the brawn of a horse's leg? Or was the real stuff a thing of no dimensions, immeasurable, from which all things were predicted, and did

Morse first thought that he was asleep. He remembered what Aloysius had said, "He sleeps a lot," and wondered how long he would have to wait. Then the eyelids fluttered and Morse caught a gleam of glazed eyeball. But no stir of lips. No effort even at acknowledgment.

He surrendered then to the silence. He dared not go out in the fresh air to wait

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because he wanted to be there when Henry finally came awake.

His shoulders went slack and he seemed literally to plunge into the silence, as if he had plunged into a pool of dark mountain water. Once beneath the surface, only the things within his own head moved, round and round, trying to fit odds and ends together. First he tried to sort out the odors—smoked buckskin, so pungent that it overpowered almost all other smells, except strong pipe smoke. And he was sure that somewhere in the depths of the interior a pot of meat was boiling. These were only the known, the identifiable; and back of them was a hint of old earth itself, of mankind emerging from smoke-filled caves and battling the land and the beasts of the land, and arriving here in a shadowy cabin that was still part cave.

He wondered how it was that silence sat so easily with these people, while it produced such a churning in him. He could not know. But he could guess that there was in them an overpowering sense of continuity, of things coming to them whole-made out of the past, against which their wills and their emotions never warred. While he, split from the past, felt the silence as a burden that strained muscle and nerve. He labored over each passing moment.

He was startled to find that Henry Jim had turned his head toward him and was watching him through weary eyes. Something like a smile pulled at his loose lips.

"The snow is here. Now I can tell you—"

Morse was wordless. For when the old man spoke, what was there to say, except perhaps to assert (which he did not think of doing) that he had seen faith work its way to its own inner core? It was surely faith—and yet, how did it work? What was the mechanism by which he knew?

There was still the suggestion of a smile when Henry spoke again. "I sold only

one horse," he remarked, his voice gaining in strength. "I didn't need much money. A few debts. One horse was enough." There he hung for a moment, considering. "This now is what I have to say. This good horse I have left. I want to take him with me. It troubles me. I know things have changed. In the old days our relatives killed a horse and put it on our grave so we could travel beyond. Now it is different. I know that—"

He fumbled with one hand at his pillow, withdrawing from underhead a soiled bit of cotton, possibly a remnant of old shirt, which in his weakness he trembled at unrolling.

"This is left—"

A crumple of bank notes lay wadded in his hand, some loose ends protruding.

The agent received the offered wad, separated the individual notes, smoothed them on the bed's edge, leaning forward from his rickety perch. The money was old, limp, in different denominations, tens, fives, ones, over fifty dollars.

"You take this money. Put me in a white man's box. Bury me in the ground. Up there where my land looks over the river. You know that place, where the river cuts a high bank. Bury me there. And I want a looking-glass there. Turn it down river."

Again a silence, held intact by the old man's gesturing spectral hand.

"It was my father stood on that hill and watched the first white men our people ever knew come up the river. It was his eyes first watched them. And since then we have all grown old watching the white men come. So I want this looking-glass to face down river and it will be my eye. I will watch what comes." A long pause, then: "You can decide about the horse. . . ."

That ended his talking. Henry Jim was tired. Mortal weariness. The twilight room perfected its mood of waiting, per-

haps listening. The dust-powdered window light showed feebly that snow still fell.

Morse realized he had to speak quickly, firmly, while old Henry was still within hearing. There was no time, this once, to await on instructions. So he spoke, and was startled to hear himself saying:

"We will do what you ask. Everything. You will have the horse—"

And then he thought, "My God! Will they all kill their horses after this?"

Henry Jim looked once more, fleetingly, then hooded his eyes under relaxing lids.

When Morse went out, he saw the bay horse again. The animal stood at the fence, as before, and gazed with whited eye toward the cabin. Once, as the agent stepped near, the horse looked away and pawed at the snow-dampened earth, head lowered. Morse thought his nostrils dilated and quivered, as if the creature had whinnied. But there was no sound, unless it had been a sound beyond hearing.

He walked to the roadside fence and extended his hand. "Come, boy! Come, old fellow!"

The bay tossed its head impatiently and continued to gaze at the cabin. Morse felt his scalp prickle, not knowing what he had seen and felt.

Aloysius had followed Morse out into the open and now he came forward, with an air of hesitancy. He came to a full stop before speaking.

"I am glad," he said, in a tone of mild wondering, "you are doing this for the old man. None of us thought a government man would do it, and we were afraid when my father asked."

"That's all right, Aloysius. It wasn't much."

"It will mean a lot to him. He wanted that horse very bad. He didn't want a scrub horse."

"Sure. I know. He wanted his good horse." He had a sense of inward shuddering when he thought, in some other part of his mind, of what he was saying.

Then Morse asked, unable to hold back any longer: "How did your father know all this was going to happen—and why wouldn't he tell me before?"

Aloysius obviously had been waiting for the question, and he smiled.

"Oh, that. He was told it in a dream. And he wasn't to speak of it until snow came. That was what the dream said."

"A dream? I see. I was afraid you were going to say that."

So he turned to go home, feeling dejected. Twenty years had not done so much for him. It had led him to a world's edge and there deserted him, with no signposts forward. And all the time, in his office, were people waiting, blue forms, plans prepared by experts. A yearly report of progress was due.

He wasn't even sure what he would tell his wife.

D'Arcy McNickle is the author of an earlier piece in our pages, "We Go On From Here," Autumn 1943. A member of the Indian Service, he is also the author of a novel about Indians, The Surrounded.

The illustrations are by Bernadine Custer.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION NOT ALLOWED

MILLA Z. LOGAN

MARIN CITY, the public war housing project on the other side of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, celebrated its first birthday last Fall.

The sprawling, ranch-house style Administration Building was taken over for the occasion by the shipyard worker tenants and their families. In the redwood lounge room, midwestern housewives set up booths, county-fair fashion, to exhibit cakes and pies made by members of the Marin City Women's Club. Prize winning tomatoes, squash, and corn were piled high in the Victory Garden booths—a harvest representing the union of Minnesota farming skill and the uneroded soil of skyline acres overlooking the Pacific. In the Council Room, where the Tenant Council meets and the Baby Clinic is held, an Oklahoma square-dance caller bawled out his dol-ce-do's to the tune of a native hill-billy band.

The big show was in the main auditorium where a quivering jive orchestra attracted the largest crowd. It was Saturday night, and on Sunday the yards would not be operating. Younger day and graveyard workers, colored and white, jittered and swayed, cheered on from the sidelines by onlookers of all ages and both races.

Among the dancers the Negroes were the liveliest and the most solemn. A willowy girl in a red dress and hat with a black lace veil and stockings to match, and a short plump girl in a yellow sweater and sneakers seemed with their partners to be the best dancers in the hall. A 10-year-old boy had such an itch in his feet his

mother had to dance around the room with him for five or six dances. The white dancers were more conservative but less serious. Occasionally one of the white couples would step aside to observe the more intricate steps of the red-dressed girl and her partner. But most of the couples were in such a trance-like concentration on their own movements that nothing distracted them, not even the scampering children who wove in and out among the dancers.

Among the sideline watchers were the oldest and youngest residents of Marin City. Mrs. Gilormia Rizzo, 71, sat with her granddaughter, Malena Kelly, who, like Marin City, was celebrating her first birthday. Mrs. Rizzo had come to applaud her son-in-law, "Pat" Kelly, whose rich Irish voice was heard in the amateur talent contest, but she stayed on far into the night to watch the performances of the tap dance contestants and to hold the baby while the Kellys danced.

I went to the party as an employee of the Marin County Housing Authority which operates Marin City. I had invited some friends, for this was my chance to "show off" the child wonder known in public housing circles in the western states as "race relations" in Marin City.

Here was eye proof that Negroes and white people (southern whites, too) could not only live together but mingle socially in harmony. "Would you believe an evening like this wouldn't end in a race riot?" my friends asked each other. In this one room relations between the two races had

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struck a happy balance. If there was no trace of hostility, neither was there any sign of forced intimacy. Although Negroes and whites were not dancing together, it was not, one felt, because a cordon sanitaire had been set up. The social pattern had fallen into very natural design. The young people, both Negroes and whites, had come to the dance in their own small "crowds" and they stayed within their own groups throughout the evening. Marin City is a fair-sized community (population 5,000) and even the 1,000 Negroes do not all know each other.

Dances like these occur in Marin City regularly. We are proud of what they signify—proud, but not complacent.

We are not complacent, because Marin City has yet gone only half the way in its fight against racial discrimination. Marin City has so far proved this much: that Negroes and race-prejudiced whites (not all of them Southerners) can live together with equality of social privileges—even though the whites don't want to. Too many people, observing the fraternization between Negroes and whites, have carried away the impression that the millennium is here and that even our white residents from Jim-Crow states have seen the error of their ways. The story I have to tell is more realistic, but it holds out strong hope for a solution of the problem "in our time."

Marin City consists of 1,500 redwood housing units sprawled over the hills outside the seaside village of Sausalito, seven miles from San Francisco. It is across the highway from Marinship and the Oakland Shipbuilding Company, where its residents work. When Marin City was ready for occupancy, its executive director, Judge Guy A. Ciocca, Marin-County-born son of Italian parents, laid down the policy that there should be no segregation. The Regional Office for public housing projects

in the western states strongly disapproves of segregation, but Marin City is one of the few local projects that started out with an announced official policy of non-segregation.

The Negro "problem" was just as new to Judge Ciocca as it was to the county in which he was born and raised. Marin County is suburban, made up of middle-class homes and some ranches and wealthy estates. Older heads who had had experience with Negroes and knew how to "treat" them said the Judge was acting with the assurance of the ignorant.

When white settlers arrive in Marin City and find Negroes already established in their apartment buildings or in the other side of their duplex houses, the outraged head of the family usually storms into the rental office. "Where I come from—" Georgia, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, etc.—"we keep the niggahs in their place and they respect us for it, too," he shouts. "Yes, ma'am, they do. I got nothing against niggahs—but they got to stay in their place. I ain't goin' to leave my wife and daughters alone at night with no niggahs prowling around. You get those niggahs out of my building or there's liable to be a dead niggah around here."

"We do not segregate Negroes here," the girls in the rental office tell the shocked Southerners. "Marin City is the property of the United States government, and here we practice the American creed of equal rights and privileges for all."

In a week or so the complainant returns. "I got to move to another house," he announces, but now he is on the defensive and it is his own family, not the Negro's that he demands be moved. "I can't stand living next door to those niggahs."

"Are they annoying you in any way?" the interviewer asks.

"It ain't that so much," he admits. "But my wife, she's afraid to live next door to niggahs."

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The interviewer tells him there are no other houses available. This is quite true—the project is filled, and the turnover is very small. Furthermore, even if he could be transferred to another house or building, he might go to all the expense (\$10 fee for transfer) and trouble of moving only to get new Negro neighbors in a few months. So he goes home, frustrated. Occasionally he comes back to the rental office and makes a few half-hearted complaints, in the spirit of one who knows he is licked before he starts, for he finds the project management is not going to yield.

"If the family is troublesome or noisy, you may complain against them just as you would against your white neighbors," he is told. "Then we will take steps to protect you. But we do not entertain complaints against any family on the grounds of race alone." He finally bows to the inexorable laws of this strange community. What else can he do? Where else can he find such adequate shelter in this overcrowded defense area?

Once he has resigned himself, he suffers less. It can be borne—as long as he is not the only white to be so "humiliated." In a community where all the whites are in the same boat, there is no stigma attached to living next door to Negroes: there is no one to administer the stigma. Back home he wouldn't think of letting his kids go to school with "niggers"—but here his kids aren't the only ones, so there is no one in whose eyes they are being lowered.

The same philosophy has been applied to social relations. Marin City has two church services every Sunday—one for Catholics and one for all Protestant creeds. Whites from Jim-Crow states and some from northern states, too, balk at attending services with Negroes. Some can be shown that such an attitude is a negation of Christian teachings, but most are responsive to this kind of reasoning only:

"The preacher (and a very good one, too) says that Negroes will be welcomed to services. Not only that, but they will be encouraged to join the choir and the ladies' auxiliary. I must either give up going to church or start going to services with Negroes. Well, I won't be the only one. Everyone else is in the same boat. The Lord will understand."

This philosophy of acceptance has been adopted by all except a very small minority.

A cross section of the general feeling was expressed by a Texan. "I don't like it at all," he said when someone asked how he liked living next door to Negroes. "But we get along all right. If anybody had told me a year ago I was going to live like this, I wouldn't have believed it. My Negro neighbors are all right. We don't have much to do with them, of course. We say 'howdy' to each other and my kids go to school with theirs. We don't have any trouble. There's no trouble between Negroes and whites in Marin City—but it just isn't right to live this way."

This man has at least abandoned the theory that Negroes do not want to live among white people. He doesn't try to tell you the Negro would rather keep to himself.

The assimilation of the Negro into the life of the community has been largely the work of a liberal tenant leadership which is not management-dominated as in some housing projects.

The dynamic young Irishman who is "mayor" of Marin City is a former member of the Oregon State Legislature, where he must have put in several blows for the important freedoms, to judge from his career in Marin City. Now, as a welder in the shipyards, "Mayor" Mike Smith has helped establish liberal policies for the Community Council. The editor of the community paper has also been on the

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front line of the liberal cause, editing progressive labor papers in his pre-shipyard days.

The influence of such leadership has induced those whites who had a passive attitude of sympathy for the plight of racial minorities to take an active stand against discrimination. The results have been seen in the encouragement extended to Negroes to take part in community activities, such as civilian defense, victory garden clubs, and adult education classes. When elections were held last spring for the first Community Council, white leaders nominated two Negroes for the 13-man Council and both were elected. Since that time there has always been at least one Negro on the Council, and only once was a Negro defeated for office and in that instance two of his opponents were also Negroes. True, the anti-Negro elements have been too apathetic to cast their votes, but at least they have not been so hostile as to agitate against the election of Negroes.

It has been said that if all the residents of Marin City (including the 20 per cent Negro population) were to go to the polls to vote on this issue: "Should Negroes be ejected from Marin City?" the vote would be in the affirmative.

This is probably true. Nevertheless, Negroes and whites are today living together in Marin City in a harmonious intimacy unknown in any other community in this area. Race riots have occurred in segregated housing projects, but in Marin City there has been "no trouble of any kind" as the Southern gentleman admitted. In the short period of one year white

people have acquired new living habits—which are already leading to new thinking habits.

But Marin City has been almost a lone wolf among housing projects in this experiment, and at the end of the war the community will disband and many of its people will return to their old environments. If public housing projects throughout the United States had followed this community's technique, there would now be millions of Americans who would have been forced to acquire new living habits. Certainly teen-age boys or girls exposed to such an environment would in a few years be launched on a more enlightened path. The influence of a large public-housing population conditioned to living with Negroes would probably have filtered through to other communities and at least a practical start in better human relations would have been made.

If wartime public housing has missed the boat in the re-education of Negroes and whites in racial relations, will it retrieve its efforts after the war? Postwar planning includes large-scale, permanent, slum-clearance projects throughout the United States. Why can't a rigid policy of non-discrimination be laid down and practiced by local authorities operating such projects?

Humanly impossible—idealistic—dangerous, people say. But Marin City has done it. Why can't others?

Milla Z. Logan is a West Coast newspaperwoman of Yugoslav descent, who worked for some time on the staff of the Marin County Housing Authority.

SOUTHERN OFFENSIVE

GUY B. JOHNSON

IN THE Spring issue of *COMMON GROUND* there appeared two articles under the title of "Southern Defensive," whose contents range from mild criticism to caustic denunciation of the recently organized Southern Regional Council. One was contributed by Mr. J. Saunders Redding, professor at Hampton Institute and author of *No Day of Triumph*; the other by Miss Lillian Smith of Clayton, Georgia, editor of *South Today* and author of the current best-selling novel *Strange Fruit*.

Miss Smith wrote briefly and with restraint, willingly conceding that "It is stupid to accuse the leaders of the Southern Regional Council of evil motives as some cynics have done." Mr. Redding wrote at some length and with a seeming compulsion to find fault. Although I shall have occasion to make several references to Miss Smith's remarks, my chief quarrel is with Mr. Redding because, in my opinion, (1) he has misstated several factual points, (2) his interpretation of the background and the program of the SRC is inadequate and unfair, (3) his value premises, which are never stated but which permeate his whole article, are unsound, and (4) he has given no indication whatever of any concern with the basic problems of strategy.

II

The reader may recall that Mr. Redding begins with some remarks about the interracial front, "defensive holding action," and the "dangerous potentials" of the Southern Regional Council as an ex-

pression of "a southern habit of thought." He then discusses the Durham-Atlanta-Richmond Conferences which led to the formation of the SRC, quotes certain excerpts from the conference statements (with italics which reveal some interesting value judgments of his own, and with some quibbling over who attended which conference and who signed what), and states that the SRC had begun to function "with the chief purpose of solving the race problem."

To tell the story of the conferences fairly and completely would take a great deal of space. If the reader will get the statements and resolutions and judge them for himself, I think he will wonder whether they are the same documents which Mr. Redding has quoted (available, together with more recent material on the structure and program of the Council, for 10 cents in stamps from the SRC, 710 Standard Building, Atlanta 3, Georgia). He will probably find the Durham statement in particular to be a courageous and inspiring document. As in any movement, there were in these conferences conflicts of personalities and of ideas, there were mistakes and limitations; but, considering the unusual variety of persons and interests represented, there was a remarkable spirit of unanimity. The important thing was that southern Negro leaders had spoken out courageously, that white leaders had accepted the challenge, and that the two groups had covenanted to take the offensive for constructive social action in the South.

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It is a bit unusual for an organization to be attacked before it is full-born, but as a matter of fact Mr. Redding's article was written before the SRC had even held its charter meeting, before it was ready to make any official announcement as to its structure, program, and personnel. It is quite in order, then for me to bring the record up to date.

Following the Atlanta Resolution of August 1943, there was much necessary committee work on procedure, finance, incorporation, etc. On January 6, 1944, the Southern Regional Council was chartered as a corporation by the State of Georgia "for the improvement of economic, civic, and racial conditions in the South, . . . to attain through research and action programs the ideals and practices of equal opportunity for all people in the region; . . ."

Afterwards the Incorporators met and designated charter members: all persons who had participated in one of the preliminary conferences and all members of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation residing in the Council's area (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas). Of the 215 thus elected to charter membership early in February, 95 per cent had accepted membership by the time of the charter meeting on February 16-17. At this meeting in Atlanta about 100 were present, many of them from long distances at their own expense. I have been in many interracial meetings in various parts of the country, but I have never seen anything that equaled this one for whole-hearted participation by all the members. For two days they discussed, they worked over by-laws, they elected officers, board members, executive directors, and executive committee. When they had finished, they had constructed a thoroughly democratic

structure and government for their Council. I wonder how many councils and organized agencies can match it. Sovereignty is vested in the members, and the membership can be increased indefinitely if the members desire to do so. At the annual meetings every member is entitled to vote, either in person or by proxy. The only requisites for membership are: (1) residence in the Council area, (2) an affirmation of belief in the purposes of the Council, and (3) payment of dues of \$1.00 a year.

Incidentally, I do not know the reason for Miss Smith's failure to receive an invitation to the Atlanta Conference of white Southerners, since I myself had no connection with the Council until January 8, 1944, but I think the omission was deplorable. I am glad to say that at the charter meeting of the SRC there were nominations of additional charter members, and her name was among the first to be nominated. If Miss Smith wants to contribute her part to the SRC, the door is open. Furthermore, I hope she will help us find those "thousands of . . . Southerners" who stand for "the basic human rights of every man," and who "are not asked to become members of the Southern Regional Council." The SRC is no better, no worse, than the members who own it.

The Council has a Board of Directors of 56 persons, of whom 22 are Negro and 34 are white. The composition of the Board may be summarized briefly as follows: education and related interests, 14; business and law, 9; religion, 7; public office and civic work, 7; labor, 4; journalism, 4; miscellaneous, 11. In order to prevent the usual ills of aging and in-growing, the by-laws provide that no Board member may serve more than two consecutive terms of four years each.

The officers for the present year are: president, Howard W. Odum; vice-presidents, P. B. Young, editor of the Norfolk

Journal and Guide, Homer P. Rainey, president of the University of Texas, and Carter Wesley, editor of the Houston Informer. These, together with seven elected members, make an executive committee of eleven (five Negro and six white), and the chairman of the committee is Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University. The executive staff is at present composed of myself as Director and Ira DeA. Reid of Atlanta University as Associate Director, but the staff will be enlarged as soon as suitable personnel can be found.

There will be a National Advisory Committee, whose function will be the co-ordination of the work of the SRC with the work of similar organizations in other parts of the nation. There will also be one hundred Honorary Fellows of the Council, drawn from the ranks of young Southerners who show promise of progressive leadership, whose function will be to assist the Council as observers, correspondents, and special investigators.

The SRC's functions are as follows: (1) clearing-house and co-ordinating work with numerous agencies working on southern problems; (2) research and survey to determine the facts and the state of public opinion as a basis for sound social action; (3) educational and propaganda activities through a monthly paper (*The Southern Frontier*), pamphlets, press, radio, conferences, and private contacts; (4) consultative services to private or official agencies; (5) constructive action at every possible point on the social, economic, political, and racial problems of the South.

I do not know where Mr. Redding got the idea that the Southern Regional Council's chief purpose is "solving the race problem." Certainly there has been no such claim in any of the statements or resolutions issued by the preliminary conferences or by the Council since its organization. The members of the Southern

Regional Council are ordinary people who do not believe in miracles, and they are not so stupid as to think that this organization, or indeed all of the organizations in the nation, could "solve the race problem." The SRC simply represents the combined efforts of liberal and progressive people of both races to do their best to give democracy a chance in the South.

At this point let me refer also to one of Miss Smith's criticisms. "It is a pity," she said, "that the Southern Regional Council was given so much publicity in race-relations terms. If they had only said in the beginning frankly, 'We are not working for racial democracy. This is not our purpose. Our purpose is to improve the economic life of our region, to help raise, wherever possible, the levels of our people's life (black and white) whenever it can be done without upsetting the basically undemocratic and inhumane patterns our demagogues, our economic exploiters, our own fears and guilts have imposed upon us. This pattern, we think, is here to stay. We have no intention of trying to change it. But whatever we can do within this pattern to ameliorate unhappy conditions, to bring more prosperity to our people, we want to do.' If they had said this, *and seen to it that the movement was not advertised as a race-relations movement*, then the Southern Regional Council might have been accepted for what it basically is, and not evaluated in terms of what it is not." To put it bluntly, Miss Smith has "loaded the dice." If I may speak for the SRC, I would put the matter this way: "Our goal is democracy and equality of opportunity. We are striving to improve the social, civic, and economic life of our region in spite of a deep-seated and undemocratic pattern of segregation. This pattern, we think, will be with us for a long, long time regardless of what any of us might think or say or do, and we believe that someone has to do

the very things that we are doing before the dissolution of this pattern can even enter the realm of possibility." With this amendment, the SRC is quite glad to be "accepted for what it basically is, and not evaluated in terms of what it is not."

III

Mr. Redding outlines what he calls three basic contradictions—and he obviously uses the word rather loosely—with respect to the proposed program of the SRC. "In the first place," says Mr. Redding, "the formation of the Southern Regional Council was a duplicating action. There was already in the field the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, Inc." Mr. Redding then asks us to believe that the leaders of the Commission have repudiated it, since some of them are also active in the SRC. He assumes that the Commission has failed and that the SRC proposes simply to duplicate the failure of the Commission. Let it be noted that he attributes to the Commission "the idea of solving the race problem by the conference method."

Here Mr. Redding's discussion is so badly muddled that one wonders whether he knows anything about the Commission. Let the following facts speak for themselves:

1. Nowhere in any of the pamphlets or public statements of the Commission can Mr. Redding find any claim that it was "solving the race problem." Indeed its officers always made it clear that they were doing an educational job by striving to promote greater mutual understanding and tolerance. If Mr. Redding presumed to speak at all about the Commission, he owed it to himself and to his readers to know such simple facts as this.

2. No one contends that the Commission did a perfect job, but no one who has observed its work over a period of years

can say flatly that it failed. In its 25 years of operation, the Commission has made interracial conferences and forums respectable almost everywhere in the South, has marshalled thousands of the church women of the South in opposition to lynching and other injustices, has sponsored significant researches on race relations, has issued over two million copies of pamphlets and leaflets, and has symbolized the awakened conscience of the southern white people. In these days of widespread race tension, hundreds of interracial committees are being organized in the North and West, committees which are following the pattern set by the Commission 25 years ago. The SRC has lately been swamped with requests for advice and for literature. And, believe it or not, the greatest number of requests for the Commission's pamphlets during the past year has come from New York!

3. Five years ago the Commission leaders, feeling that the educational program which it started out to do had become thoroughly established, and recognizing the need for new blood and new ideas, began to explore the possibility of broadening the scope of the organization and improving its techniques. In October 1940 the Commission instructed its executive committee to "take whatever steps are necessary to carry out the plans for the formation of a council on southern regional development," which would include in its program "the work of the Commission and other activities connected with the economic, educational, and social development of the South." Accordingly, an evaluative study of the Commission was made and a plan for expansion was drawn up. In the meantime, the Durham-Atlanta-Richmond conferences matured to a similar purpose, and the outcome was that on the day of the charter meeting of the SRC, the Commission met and formally merged its program with, and

transferred its assets to, the Southern Regional Council.

4. The main efforts of the Council in its first few months of existence are being directed toward conserving and stimulating the state and local interracial committees throughout the South, because it believes they can play an important role in implementing the program of the Council.

In the light of these facts, Mr. Redding's comments seem somewhat vaporous. There is no contradiction, no repudiation, and Mr. Redding could have known all of these facts by talking to any member of the Commission or by addressing a letter to the Secretary, for the "secrecy" which he refers to is a figment of his imagination.

As for techniques, the Council has no illusions about brand-new ones lying around like hidden Easter eggs, waiting to be found. We shall indeed use the old, old methods of propaganda, conference, personal pressure, etc., but we do believe there is a lot of room for the exercise of insight, cleverness, and common sense in questions of *strategy*. We shall not pretend that we have a big stick when we haven't got a big stick. We shall not rely on "mass protests," denunciations, and big headlines, for we believe that the test of any technique is *what it gets done* and not the amount of ego satisfaction which it gives to its users.

The second contradiction, says Mr. Redding, is that the src is "enslaved by one big, common thing. . . . Segregation." Apparently, Mr. Redding means that no one can honestly say that he is doing any good in race relations unless he has first denounced segregation. Of the southern leaders who "recognize"—as any anthropologist might do—the existence and strength of "legal and customary patterns," he says that "by their own utterances they cancel out the very measures

that would bring the solution." Likewise Miss Smith thinks that little progress is possible until the leaders "acknowledge publicly the basic truth that segregation is injuring us . . .," and the editor of *COMMON GROUND* adds that there is not much hope until we "come clean on ultimate goals and acknowledge that segregation is wrong. . . ."

If the authors mean to imply that segregation is the race problem, or that the race problem is to be "solved" by attacking segregation, one of its major symptoms, then they are talking nonsense. Or perhaps the assumption underlying their statements might be that if enough people would "come clean" and "acknowledge publicly" that segregation is wrong, the race problem would soon be on the way to solution. It makes sense, in a way, because it would signify that people had already given up the attitudes which create race problems, but there remains the strategic problem of how to get people to give up the basic attitudes which produce segregation. The src, I repeat, belongs to its members. By majority vote they can "acknowledge publicly" anything they wish, but I think that the feeling of the majority at present is as follows: "We believe that it is more realistic to base a movement on the support of thousands who are willing to do *something* than on the support of a few lonely souls who denounce segregation and are powerless to do anything about it." Personally, I should rather help to capture the foothills which have to be captured sooner or later than merely to point out the distant peak and urge my comrades to storm it at once! I, too, can see the peak, but I see no particular virtue in starting an association of peak-gazers.

Speaking of contradictions, Miss Smith presents us with one which is indeed puzzling. She opens her article by likening a people's life to "a knotted skein of yarn," and makes this very sensible observation:

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"If someone said, 'There is only one right way to untangle these knots; here—take this thread and work only on it until the whole is untangled,' we would think the adviser downright silly." After that warning, she seems to be saying through the remainder of the article that the only way to untangle the knot is by pulling out one thread, segregation.

"The third basic contradiction in the proposed program of the Southern Regional Council," says Mr. Redding, "is to be found in the avowed intention to solve sectionally (that is, in the South) a problem that is admittedly national." (There is that word "solve" again. Interesting, isn't it, how it keeps cropping up in Mr. Redding's vocabulary?) Here the author strains at some length to make the SRC a sinister thing of "potential danger" to the Negro, all because the Council is a "sectional" effort. Lacking any clear conception of the structure, spirit, and membership of the SRC, and arguing from an extremely shaky assumption, he strays into such ludicrous statements as: "... it is not hard to imagine the unscrupulous using the Southern Regional Council. . . ." and that "It is not hard to imagine appeals to the Southern Regional Council to speak out against the program of the NAACP and the FEPC."

The shaky assumption is obviously this: that since the race problem is national, there is something inherently wrong or dangerous in the effort of people living in a particular region to work on the problem within their region. Against that, let me set the following propositions: (1) The race problem is national—yes, international, universal—but it does not follow that the problem will therefore be solved at every point at the same time and by the same methods. (2) There is nothing innately sacred or superior about a program or organization merely because it is "na-

tional" or "federal," and nothing innately dangerous or inferior merely because it is regional. (3) Every region has a certain amount of pride and self-consciousness and is certainly entitled, if not obligated, to take the initiative in dealing with the problems which affect its people. (4) In a region such as the South—a region which has been the object of sympathy, contempt, ridicule, philanthropy, exploitation, and free advice—"outside influences" can and actually do sometimes retard progress by provoking defensive attitudes and providing alibis for inaction. The statement that "the South must work out its own salvation" is sound psychology and sound psychiatry. I believe that these propositions are practically self-evident, and that the burden of proof would be upon anyone who denies them.

The Southern Regional Council apologizes to no one for being a regional organization, for it has posted no "keep out" signs, has attacked no national organizations, and has declared its willingness to co-operate with other organizations—state, regional, or national. It is in fact rather proud that it has put the South in a position to take the offensive at home by undermining that hoary alibi, "outside agitator."

Let us set the record straight on one more point, namely, the appeal at the close of the Atlanta resolution of August 4, 1943: "It is also respectfully urged that the President of the United States appoint a National Committee such as is suggested above." Mr. Redding mentions it at least three times and assures us that it was an "incidental second thought." He does not tell us that the resolution referred to "a national committee" three times and that it twice affirmed its desire to work "with a similar national group when established."

The President was duly requested to appoint a national committee, but he has

not yet done so. I have been told, though I cannot vouch for the statement, that he had been approached with so many conflicting proposals by so many groups, most of them from the New York area, which had not taken the trouble to get acquainted and to co-ordinate their efforts, that he concluded it was not feasible to appoint such a committee. In the meantime, the SRC did not sit idly by, waiting for the President to do something. It proceeded to organize, and it has reason to believe that the pattern which it set is going to be followed in one or two other regions. Perhaps a national committee will finally come as a capstone to the regional councils.

IV

Ward Shepard's article on "The Tools for Ethnic Democracy" in the same issue of *COMMON GROUND* gives the reader a lift. Here is a man who has faith in the possibilities of co-operative social action, and who knows the ins and outs of strategy. He knows that "No miracle of organization can swiftly change deep-seated habits and prejudices," and he takes it for granted that "The process will be gradual, it will be highly variable as to time and place; . . ." Mr. Redding contents himself with condemnation, but has nothing to offer by way of program or strategy. Does he know where he is going, and how? Mr. Redding's premises on strategy are never expressed, but they are lurking in the background. Let the reader note the frequency of some such phrase as "solving the race problem," the erroneous attribution of the "solving" idea to the Commission on Interracial Cooperation and to the Southern Regional Council, the occurrence of phrases like "powers of enforcement" and "federally delegated powers," "solid Negro front," and in the

peroration those words "hold the line," "push ahead," and "no retreat," and the reader will probably detect the symptoms of a compulsion to believe that there must be some easy, miraculous way to solve the race problem.

Yes, Mr. Redding, "it is extremely doubtful that the Southern Regional Council can even hold the line against the reaction that is bound to set in. . . ." We have no more power than the combined will, moral conviction, and integrity of our members, and we do not believe in miracles. We do believe that in spite of obstacles there is a range within which hard work and intelligent strategy can induce social change. We neither wallow in the comfort of laissez-faireism nor in the smug illusion that we are solving the race problem, but we are on the offensive!

Dr. Guy B. Johnson left a professorship of sociology at the University of North Carolina to take over the direction of the Southern Regional Council in January of this year. Born in Texas, schooled at Baylor, the University of Chicago, and the University of North Carolina, he has specialized in research on Negro folk music and race relations.

COMMON GROUND agrees with Dr. Johnson that it is important "to capture the foothills." It would insist, however, that the purpose of taking the foothills be made clear—the ultimate taking of the peak beyond. For a mere program of amelioration within the framework of segregation is only a palliative, and the times are tense for palliatives.

We ask again, with Lillian Smith, "Do we want human equality for the Negro or only a better reputation for the white man?" CG stands firm for human equality.—Ed.

SHALL WE GO BACK?

ELFREDA NORDELL

FATHER came into the room, a letter in his hand. "From Sweden," he said happily and sat down on the sofa beside Mother. Mother dropped her beadwork: Dagmar, my twin sister, and I stopped playing with our dolls. He drew his slim Swedish knife out of his pocket and slit the envelope open neatly.

"From Eric and Karin Johansson," he said as he drew out the thin foreign paper.

"Of course, I knew the handwriting," said Mother.

Three years ago they had crossed the wide Atlantic on the same steamer with us, sailing from Stockholm to New York. Three years ago, they too had caught America fever and nothing would do but pull up stakes, sell house and goods, and set out for big free rich astonishing America.

Three years ago, Dagmar and I had been only four years old. All we retained of Sweden were deep-rooted feelings, fragmentary flashes—dancing around a Maypole, long blue twilights, a painted porcelain stove, flaming Northern Lights, a red-sailed boat, a smiling face above a plinking guitar.

But Papa and Mama Johansson had returned to Sweden. America's tempo and ways were not to their liking. Papa Johansson was a master cabinet-maker and had had a good job in New York, but New York was not clean like Stockholm and everything was pushed with ridiculous speed, no time off even for eleven-o'clock-coffee and the language was beset with

crazy spelling. In Stockholm one could own a boat and go sailing on Sundays; people sang more and danced more and laughed more. After a year of struggle, they sailed back to their clean understandable Stockholm. Now they were happy and getting richer and richer, all through an American idea they had carried back with them.

But here was Father beginning to read the letter:

Älskade Olof och Christine (Beloved Olof and Christine):

How does it go with you, dear friends, in America? You are so often in our thoughts, always in our hearts. We are sorry to learn that hard times have come to America. Is it true that so many mills and factories are closed and the people are *arbetslösa* (out of work)?

Father glanced up from the letter and looked at Mother. She swayed her head from side to side and said, "Ähkh, *Herre Gud!* What sad times."

Arbetslösa! A sad word, packed with meaning for Dagmar and me too. Father losing his job. Living in two small shabby rooms on a dirty street near the ear-splitting Third Avenue El. No more rides on the swan boats in Central Park. No little trips out of the city. Mother doing beadwork from morning to night. *Arbetslösa*—as if a giant hand had swept away the pleasant things of life and set a rock on everybody's head.

But Father was reading the letter again:

Here in Sweden, America fever continues to surge the length and breadth of the land. Agents of steamship companies jostle one another, exciting the people to pull up stakes and sail for the land of plenty. The young people crowd the steamers and in some of the small villages only the old remain. Our neighbors, the Lindströms, have lost all their seven children to America. When Selma, the youngest, was leaving—her coat and hat on, her little blue trunk ready and strapped—Mrs. Lindström threw herself across it and, sobbing bitterly, would not let go. Mr. Lindström had to put his arms around her and loosen her grasp. So it goes.

As to our own affairs, we must acknowledge that America did us a good turn. That certainly was a lucky practical idea we took back with us—the building of these easily-constructed inexpensive American coffins. They are rapidly replacing the cumbersome Swedish ones. We must enlarge the factory and, to tell the truth, we are making more money than we ever dreamed.

Now followed detailed information concerning the factory. Dagmar and I caught only the rhythm of the language and a vague meaning here and there. But what was this? Were we going back to Sweden? Papa Johansson wrote there was a fine place in the factory for Father. They needed a man like him for superintendent. They hoped soon to welcome Father and Mother and their dear children in *Gamla Sverige* (Old Sweden). As for money, that could be advanced.

Father put the letter down and studied Mother's face. "Shall we go back?" said Mother. "It seems a good chance. But I can't help it, I feel ashamed to return after all our lofty ideas and lofty words."

Father shook his head slowly. "No. We will hold out a little longer. Slack times

have come to America. Mills and factories have shut down, yes, but they will reopen. America needs skilled workmen, and I know my trade. We will hold out a bit longer. I like America. I like the bounce in the air."

"Herre Gud. I would like bounce in the factories. Couldn't you take the work as guide in Castle Garden? Just until you find something else?" asked Mother.

"Impossible. The man I'd work for is a damnable crook. He lies without shame to the immigrants just to fill up the railroad trains and put money in his pocket. He lies about the wages, the place, everything. New York is putting through some new laws and I hope they get him."

Mother shook her head and rolled her eyes. "What tricksters! No wonder Cousin Hannah Sandgren went back to Sweden." The tears rose in her eyes.

We knew Cousin Hannah Sandgren's tale—the men in the Immigrant Bank who took her Swedish gold and gave her only part value in American paper money. She had gone back to Sweden and now had her job as nurse in a Stockholm hospital again. She did not like America either. "America!" she said. "America is a land of bandits and crooks!" But Father said Cousin Hannah Sandgren had seen only one side of America—a bad side.

Father was reading the letter again.

A joke was played on the King last week. You remember how fond he is of sports. He was out skating on Lake Mälär, right with the public, for he is quite democratic. The day was clear and sunny and he took off his great fur-lined coat and hung it over a bench. When he returned, there was a coat on the bench to be sure, but it was not the King's coat. It was some wretched beggar's coat, old, ragged, and dirty. The King laughed and thought it a big joke. The newspapers printed the story and all Stockholm laughed.

We laughed, too, and finally the letter drew to a close.

So farewell, for this time, dear Olof and Christine. We hope you will think well of the proposition and return to Stockholm. Write a letter by return steamer saying, "Coming."

May God bless and keep you and your dear children in His safe and loving care.

Always your devoted friends,

Eric and Karin

We sat silent. Mother dried her tears and sighed, "Dear, kind Eric and Karin. We must sleep on the proposition. What a joy it would be to see them." Then she began to hustle about saying she must scratch together something for lunch. At that very minute, there was a loud knock on the door. In came Uncle Knut, laughing and carrying a big covered basket.

Mother eyed it. "I Gud's *namn* (In God's name), what have you there, dear brother?"

Uncle Knut put the basket on the kitchen table and began unloading: a roast of beef, a slab of bacon, butter, eggs, and a huge coffee cake filled with raisins and nuts. Mother kept up a sing-song: "Käre bror, käre bror (Dear brother, dear brother)!" Father walked up to him with outstretched hand. But Uncle Knut said it was nothing, that Father had done much more for him. Mother was a whirlwind and got out pots and pans. The kitchen began to fill with beautiful aromas. "I love the fragrance of flowers, and am charmed by a woman's lips. But nothing equals the scent of FRIED BACON!" rhymed Father in Swedish.

With that, he put on his coat and hat. He would not stay, he said; he must have some fresh air and get in motion. But Dagmar and I knew he was going out again to hunt a job. Here he was the smartest man in New York and knew

every place in the city. All the horse cars and ferries and the Brooklyn Bridge, and he never lost his way. All the big buildings and what the people did in them. He even knew the proper people to vote for. Every day he read the New York Herald and wise books. And yet he couldn't find a job. America was not so easy.

At last, Mother and Uncle Knut and Dagmar and I sat down to the loaded table. We paid no attention at first to anything but the big business of eating, until we could only sigh and Uncle pinched us and said, "Sju tusen sju hundra sjuttio-sju dundrande djävular (7,777 thundering devils) take me around the waist, if their stomachs aren't stretched into four corners!" Then we began to listen to Mother and Uncle.

"Isn't it true, little Sister, that you have been skimping? Trying to make your savings reach far? So I bought the very best the market offers. I always treat my stomach well, and then it treats me well."

Uncle Knut patted his stomach and beamed. We laughed and hopped up in his lap, what there was of it, and played with his gold watch and chain, and his ruby scarf pin and his ring with the big carved stone.

"How do you like your work in the railroad company?" asked Mother.

"Bra, bra (Good, good). We are sending the immigrants out west to Kansas. Thousands of big husky Swedes where they get free land. Free land! Most of them have never owned a clod before. What do you think of that? Rather neat, say I."

"But is your company honorable? Such tricks are played on the immigrants! Just to fill the trains."

Uncle laid his hand on Mother's knee. "Don't worry, little Sister. You can rely on every word my company says. Every word. They are not tricksters. They are

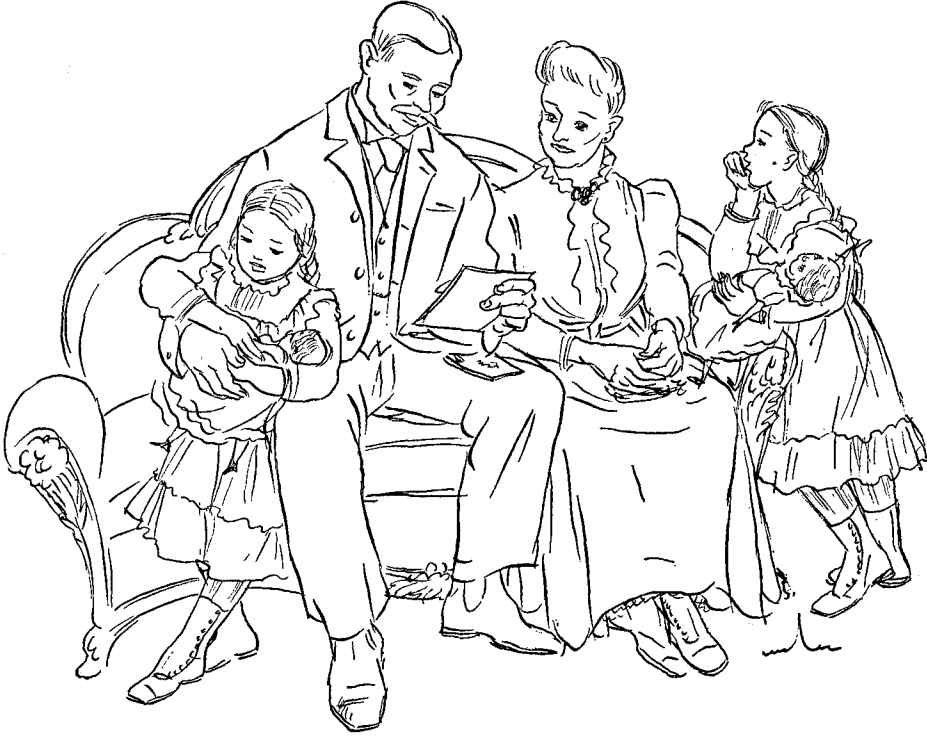
SHALL WE GO BACK?

doing well for the immigrants and for themselves and for me, too." And Uncle played with his gold chain.

"Now," said Mother, "I have big news for you," and she handed Uncle Knut the letter from Sweden.

cut. Connecticut. A funny clicking word. Reliable firm. Good pay. Now that we could get out of New York, perhaps he could have a room for his inventions. And a garden!

Uncle Knut pumped Father's hand, up



They read every word twice over and talked and talked, but Uncle said that Father would never be happy in Sweden. He liked adventure and America suited him . . . big . . . moved fast . . . opportunities . . . new ideas. "Try to hold on a bit longer," he said.

Suddenly the door opened. Father! He looked different.

Mother ran to him. "Olof, you have found work!"

He snapped his fingers above his head. "How did you get that news? Out of the air?"

Yes, he had a job—as foreman of the pattern shop in a foundry in Connecti-

cut. "Congratulations! We must celebrate. Tante Anna and I will be around this evening. Shall I bring along two lively handsome students from Uppsala University—two young devils out for adventure? Just landed yesterday. Crossed in steerage and have spent the livelong day bathing and scrubbing and airing their clothes to get rid of 'immigrant smell.' That's a hell of a smell."

"Fetch them along. What is one more smell on this street of reeking smells! And we'll get fresh news from Sweden."

The two handsome students had no "immigrant smell" but elegant manners. They clicked their heels, bowed and

kissed Mother's hand, beamed upon Dagmar and me and said, "Ah-h. Genuine blondes!" God was good and the students dashing. Papa and Mama Nyvall came too, Papa Nyvall with his flute and Mama Nyvall with her clear voice and many songs. The shabby rooms rang with gaiety. In fact they didn't look shabby, for Mother had unearthed out of the big beautiful chest a handwoven cloth and spread it over the table, and it was so dazzling the room didn't show at all.

Everybody was agog to hear about Sweden, about the steamer, the immigrants, the wretched food, a storm, America fever. The coffee pot was kept busy and everybody drank endless cups and ate sandwiches and cake.

The students asked Father if there were Indians in Connecticut. Father said, "Ja. But they are in the ground." They laughed and said they were going West, for they must see live Indians and cowboys. They seemed to think America was a circus.

The room became a babble of discussion, and god-like names filled the air . . . Trabelli . . . Jenny Lind . . . Ole Bull . . . Patti . . . Paganini . . . Christina Nilsson. . . All of a sudden, we saw Uncle Knut stand up magnificent in his new checked suit and gold watch chain. "Now we must drink a *skål* to Olof and Christine and their offspring," he said, and before we knew what it was all about, everybody was on his feet with glass held high, and Dagmar and I were whisked up to stand alongside Father and Mother. There we four stood, sparkling in our best clothes, and all the company clinked glasses with Father and Mother and said, "Skål!" and wished us good luck in Connecticut.

Now we were on our way in America.

Elfreda Nordell is the author of an earlier sketch on her Swedish American childhood, in the Winter 1943 issue of CG. Bernadine Custer is the illustrator.

• The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

RACE DISCRIMINATION IN THE RAILWAY MAIL ASSOCIATION

THE New York Civil Rights Law forbids discrimination "by reason of race, color, or creed," by a "labor organization." The Railway Mail Association, with branches in New York State, feared prosecution under the Act because its constitution limits membership to railway postal clerks of the Caucasian and Indian races. At the Albany Special Term last year it applied to Mr. Justice Murray for a declaratory judgment determining

that the Association is not a "labor organization" within the meaning of the statute, and that, if it is such an organization, the statute is unconstitutional if applied to the Association. On November 3, 1943, Justice Murray rendered a decision agreeing with the contentions of the Association.

Obviously, if a labor group were to be permitted to nullify the statute by the easy claim that it is not a "labor organi-

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zation," the door would be opened wide to acts discriminating against Negro, Jewish, and other workers. The Industrial Commissioner and the Attorney General of the State of New York, with the NAACP acting as *amicus curiae*, appealed from the decision, and in January of this year the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of New York unanimously reversed the decision and ordered the complaint of the Association dismissed.

In his opinion for the Court, Mr. Justice Bliss pointed out that the Association has always functioned as a labor union or labor organization. Among its functions are the improvement of the mail service and the conditions of employment. The opinion points out that the Association has claimed credit for having secured many material benefits for its members. The Association is classified as a labor union in the official bulletin of the

United States Department of Labor. Since 1917 it has been a member of the American Federation of Labor. "The Association comes clearly within the statutory definition of a labor union," concluded the Court.

The Court also held that, as applied to the Association, the Civil Rights Act is constitutional, for the State makes no attempt through the statute to infringe upon the Federal power to conduct the postal system. The statute is merely "an effort to prevent racial and religious discrimination in all labor organizations operating within the State."

By implication, the decision also approves the unionization of government employees. It is regrettable that the approval was not express, for this question affects hundreds of thousands of workers in government employ, and the law on this subject is not yet well defined.

ENFORCEMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS

THE Railway Mail Association case focuses attention on the problem how best to obtain maximum observance of civil rights laws in the various states and by the Federal government. Fortunately, in New York, the Attorney General and the Industrial Commissioner saw their duty clearly and vindicated the New York statute; but reliance on the personal equation is extremely precarious.

Civil rights acts are to be found in only eighteen of our states. In seven of the eighteen, the acts provide only for criminal prosecution; in California only a civil action may be brought; in five, the acts allow both a criminal and a civil action for damages; in New Jersey there may be criminal prosecution or an action for a penalty in the name of the State, the amount recovered going to the State.

But the average person whose civil

rights are invaded by a discriminatory act does not have the time to go to an attorney and later to court. And if he does institute an action for damages, in the few states which permit such suit, he runs a high risk of losing, in which case he will need to pay costs and fees. Juries are loath to bring a verdict against the defendant-owner of a restaurant, lunch room, or other place of public accommodation. The average juror asks himself: "If I were in business, who could blame me if I did not wish to chance losing my white customers by serving a Negro? Why, then, should I penalize this poor devil for acting the way I would have acted?"

Grand juries react similarly when a criminal complaint is filed against a business man alleged to have violated the law. In the case of such complaints there

are two hurdles for the aggrieved party: the grand jury when he seeks an indictment, and the trial jury if one is returned.

The Federal Department of Justice some years ago set up a Civil Rights Unit to investigate complaints involving violation of Federal civil rights laws. Now New Jersey has led the way for other states by providing in an act, passed in March, that the Attorney General shall have the duty to enforce the New Jersey Civil Rights Law. Under this legislative mandate, Attorney General Van Riper will designate an assistant in the Law Department as the civil rights enforce-

ment attorney. Hereafter, an aggrieved party will be able to place his complaint with the Law Department and look to it for an undertaking to vindicate his rights. If the Law Department fails to act, the party still has his remedies as heretofore. In the New York legislature, a similar bill, introduced in March to set up a Civil Rights Bureau in the Attorney General's Department, was not acted on by the legislature after Governor Dewey failed to press for action but appointed, instead, still another commission to investigate race discrimination and violations of civil rights.

ALIEN CHINESE NOW ELIGIBLE TO OWN LAND

IN seven states—Arizona, California, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, New Mexico, and Oregon—aliens ineligible for citizenship (mainly Chinese and Japanese) were not until recently permitted to own land. In Washington, Missouri, and Kentucky, only declarants for citizenship could own land (Chinese and Japanese could not by law be declarants).

One would think the statutes of these states would have been declared by the courts unconstitutional; yet the Supreme Court in 1923 and 1924 held the California and Washington acts constitutional. The Court held that a state may distinguish between aliens who have declared their intention to become citizens and aliens who have not become declarants, even though by this distinction ineligible aliens are excluded from land ownership. The Court said that "it is obvious" that one who is not a citizen and cannot become one lacks an interest in the welfare of the state, and because of this lack the state may deny him the right to own, or even lease, real estate; otherwise, argued the Court, "it is within the realm of possibility" that every

foot of land within the state might pass to the ownership or possession of non-citizens.

The answer to the Court was also "obvious": will the ineligible alien acquire a greater interest in the welfare of the state by being legislated into landlessness? Are ineligible aliens more of a menace on farms than in factories and kitchens? Are such aliens likely to turn good farms into waste places?

As to the alien Chinese in this country, the situation has changed since the enactment of Public Law 199 on December 17, 1943. This repealed the Chinese Exclusion Laws, provided for immigration quotas for Chinese, and made them eligible for naturalization. Interpreting this law, Robert W. Kenny, Attorney General of California, on February 14 declared that alien Chinese are no longer prohibited from acquiring real property in the State of California.

This Congressional act leaves unchanged the law relating to alien Japanese and other aliens ineligible for American citizenship. Congressman Emanuel Celler on March 17 introduced a bill to place

the people of India in the class with the people of China with respect to an immigration quota and the right of naturalization. The bill has been sent to the Depart-

ment of Justice for interpretation and amendments; but much remains to be done by way of creating favorable opinion behind the bill.

• Miscellany •

THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON RACE RELATIONS has been established in Chicago as the outgrowth of a national conference in March, attended by 75 experts in the field. President is Clarence E. Pickett, executive head of the American Friends Service Committee; vice-president, Charles H. Houston, Washington attorney and member of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice. (Address for the present through the Rosenwald Fund, 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.)

To act as a national clearing house, the Council's program includes (1) advancement of knowledge concerning race and race relations both by the collection and analysis of records of interracial relationships and by original research; (2) assistance to local communities in organizing to meet their interracial problems where the existing program seems inadequate; (3) co-operation with public and private agencies and individuals working in the interracial field by supplying needed information, by advice concerning procedures, and by the temporary loan of personnel; (4) assistance in developing materials and programs for use in public schools and other educational institutions; (5) increasing knowledge about racial groups by popular education through the radio, press, movies, and other means of mass communication.

Stressing democratic rights for Negroes, the Council will also concern itself with the whole field of discrimination against minorities.

FIRST OF A MONTHLY SERIES of receptions for new citizens in New York City was given by the Common Council for American Unity May 20, the eve of "I Am an American Day." These are designed to convey to new citizens appreciation by older Americans of their entry into the fraternity of citizenship and serve to strengthen the ties which make for unity and better understanding. Among the speakers were Earl G. Harrison, United States Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization; Judge Edwin L. Garvin of the state Supreme Court; and Eddie Cantor. Broadcast locally, the program served also as the focal point of other parties in various settlement houses and libraries and other social welfare agencies in touch with new citizens in their districts.

DESIGNED TO ASSIST members of the Bench and Bar, civil and educational authorities, and patriotic organizations in their efforts to dignify and emphasize the significance of citizenship, particularly in relation to the ceremony of citizenship induction as a part of the naturalization process, is a pamphlet, "The Gateway to Citizenship," published by and available from the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

THE ANISFIELD AWARDS for the best books on race relations published in 1943 went to two authors: \$1,500, as the first prize, to Maurice Samuel for *The World*

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of Sholom Aleichem; and \$500, as the second prize, to Roi Ottley for *New World A-Coming*. For the history of these awards, see CG Summer 1942.

THE SPINGARN MEDAL for the "highest and noblest achievement" by an American Negro, presented annually by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, has been awarded this year to Dr. Charles R. Drew, professor of surgery at Howard University, Washington, D.C., for his outstanding work in blood plasma. Dr. Drew was appointed first director of the American Red Cross blood plasma bank set up in New York City in 1941, which became the model for the other blood banks across the country. Ironically, at the time he was setting up the blood bank, Dr. Drew's blood would have been rejected by the Red Cross, and even now would be segregated with that of other Negroes, despite the lack of any scientific basis to support such segregation.

VARIOUS INSTITUTES OR WORKSHOP COURSES may be of interest to readers.

The Wellesley School of Community Affairs, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts (Miss Edith R. West, executive secretary), will stress "Cultural Differences Within the American Community." Under the direction of Dr. Margaret Mead, well-known anthropologist, the School will run from June 29 to August 10 in three separate but related two-week periods—the first designed for teachers or youth leaders; the second for personnel officers, trades-union educational secretaries, and vocational guidance counselors; and the third for community and social leaders.

An Intercultural Education Workshop will be offered at Teachers College, Columbia University, from July 3 to August 11, to include elementary and secondary

school teachers and supervisors, instructors in teachers colleges, and administrators of school systems. A demonstration class, junior high school level, will be associated with the work. Address Prof. Donald P. Cottrell for details.

A similar Intercultural Education Workshop will be offered by the Graduate School of Education of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, from July 3 to August 12, specializing only on teacher education in intercultural relations. Address Acting Dean Philip J. Rulon for details.

The first Institute of Race Relations to be held under the auspices of the Race Relations Division of the American Missionary Association will come July 3rd to 21st at the Social Science Institute of Fisk University at Nashville, Tennessee. This will provide an intensive and practical course of study of the problems and methods of dealing with racial situations, and grows out of the needs expressed for information and guidance on current problems made acute by the war. For further information address the Director.

An Institute of International Relations on the "Conditions for an Enduring Peace" will be held at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio, July 5th to 15th, under the auspices of the American Friends Service Committee in cooperation with the College. The Institute will provide an opportunity for study and discussion of world problems and the necessary conditions for enduring peace, under the leadership of authorities representing many points of view and from various countries. Address requests for information to John Kavanaugh, American Friends Service Committee, 12 N. Third Street, Columbus 15, Ohio.

An Inter-American Education Workshop will be held at the University of Denver, June 19 to July 21, under the

auspices of the University and the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs. This is planned for those interested in inter-American relationships, either with regard to our own Spanish-speaking people of the Southwest and Rocky Mountain region or those who reside South of the border. Details may be obtained from Dr. Wilhelmina Hill, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado.

YOUNGSTERS FROM SOME of the New York City schools have banded together into an Inter-Racial Youth Committee (Arthur Allen Cohen, 1100 Park Avenue, New York City). Their program includes group meetings, discussions, and entertainments at which an effort is made to attract people who have no special prejudice but who, because they have never known, talked to, or been with a Negro, tend to shy away from his problem. They are also arranging for assemblies in the schools. On the executive council are six colored boys and girls and five white students, representing a wide diversity of religious backgrounds.

SOUTHERN LIBERALS have been speaking out with increasing frequency on race relations. After the widely publicized "white supremacy resolution" passed by the South Carolina House of Representatives in March, twenty of the state's most influential white citizens issued a collective appeal for a "drastic revision in our attitude toward our colored citizens," which pointed out that "the only white supremacy which is worthy of the name is that which exists because of virtue, not power," and outlined a program toward effecting racial readjustments.

A resolution passed by the Board of Directors of the Southern Regional Council in late April condemned the injection into the political campaigns in various parts of the South of the "race issue,"

"white supremacy," and "social equality" as "unfair and destructive of the spirit and co-operation which we need now as never before," and appealed to "all good citizens to consider carefully whether those persons who use such tactics are worthy of public trust." Another resolution called on "all fair-minded citizens of the South to respect the letter and the spirit" of the Supreme Court's White Primary Decision. "To deny the vote to qualified Negro citizens is inconsistent with the American ideal of justice and equality before the law," the statement read. "We can not honestly wage a war for freedom and democracy in foreign lands when we deny to our own Negro citizens the rights and privileges which are justly theirs."

400 leading white Alabamians also issued a statement in late April calling on patriotic citizens to condemn every effort through press and radio to arouse race hatred, deploring "the injection of the race issue into Alabama's political campaign. We believe that those who resort to such tactics misjudge the people of Alabama and their devotion to the democratic faith and to the ideal of Christian brotherhood."

Another statement, sponsored by the Southern Conference for Human Welfare and signed by several hundred ministers, educators, business men, labor leaders, and housewives, acclaimed the Supreme Court decision as "a bulwark to the freedom of all Americans, for so long as any group can be discriminated against because of race, religion, nationality or other arbitrary reason, just so long will the liberties of all be in jeopardy."

A DETAILED PAMPHLET on the "What's Cooking in Your Neighbor's Pot?" parties may be had for 60 cents from the Common Council, 222 Fourth Avenue, New York City 3.

THE NEGRO PRESS ON THE WHITE PRIMARY DECISION

"THE recent decision of the United States Supreme Court ruling that Negroes are entitled to vote in the primary elections must be looked upon by Negroes of our region as something far more than a door of opportunity opened to them. Verily, it presents a mighty challenge to all of us, interested in and committed to the principles of clean and honest government, to begin anew to bestir ourselves in the schools and colleges, in our civic and social clubs, private and public, to the end that these groups will emphasize, and stress always, the sacredness of the ballot.

"Resentment over the decision in the South is based partially upon the fear that Negroes, certain classes of them, will be given too much power if they are allowed the use of the ballot. Another feeling is that this class of Negro voter is purchasable. . . . All of this leads us to advocate strongly that our schools, colleges, our churches and all social and uplift organizations should begin an educational campaign, emphasizing, not merely the ballot, but also the right use of the ballot. For indeed no purchasable group in our population can be tolerated."—*Editorial, Atlanta Daily World, April 7.*

"The decision not only means that Negroes are free, but it means the whole South is free for the first time since Reconstruction and in a position to unite for the good of the section. . . . But for the Negro and the white man in the South the victory offers a challenge which should be sobering. For with the right to vote the Negro also inherits the great

responsibility to understand the issues involved in the progress of the South and make his vote contribute to the advancement of the South. As he comes on the stage in political life, he must play the role of citizen without flaw, without giggling, without boasting, without haughtiness and with simple dignity. The white man faces the task of accepting the Constitution and the principles of democracy without resentment, without bitterness and with the good grace that becomes a Christian and a good sportsman. Not only is the destiny of the South involved in how each of these groups face up to their responsibility, but in a definite sense the welfare of the nation and the hopes of peoples throughout the world are involved in what happens here among us in the South. For the right to vote is at once the badge of citizenship and the instrument of statesmanship and Christianity."—*Editorial, Houston Informer, April 8.*

". . . Now that we are on the highway, along which men make their way to ambition, it is up to us what use we make of our new found power. We are still a minority, but other minorities make alliances that enable them to put over their plans. We still have enemies. But who has not? The truth is we are now on our own, and can sink or swim. We can no longer invite sympathy by relating the injustices done us. We cannot beg for consideration. We must go forward paying service for service, honestly and cheerfully. It won't be easy. The boy on entering manhood must overcome ignorance and survive failure. So must we.

"Equality has been the letter of the law since our country adopted a Constitution. That it was not realized is shown by slavery having existed while patriots made perfervid speeches about liberty and the rights of man. At most, equality has been a goal. This decision opens the door to us. But freedom to march is not marching. Human progress includes many a bloody mile when only faith gave encouragement. Much depends upon the way our people face their new possibility and their grave responsibility, and how resolutely they start marching.

"This is no time for bitter denunciations of the system that has left us untrained in a land of public schools. For every hurt inflicted on a black citizen, ignorance has done another to his white neighbor. It is for us to help all men up, now that we are to share in running the government.

"On every side there are evidences that our entry into southern elections comes at an opportune time. There is still some of the old insistence on segregation and limitation, but there is growing up an appreciation of the individual, of his rights and inherent dignity, regardless of race. Southern newspapers are only a step behind the rest of the white press in saying it is time for the spirit of the Constitution to prevail. It is for Negroes to complete the establishment of the new order by what they make of themselves. They must not only register and vote, they must work and pay taxes. This is their government and they must help maintain it."—*Editorial, Kansas City Call, April 14.*

". . . The decision of the high court represents the leap the nation is taking towards a higher standard of morality and brotherhood. It should be recalled that this is the same court that many years ago said 'the black man has no rights a white

man is bound to respect.' This was the crux of the Dred Scott decision. There have been rapid strides in the field of civil liberties since the day when the immortal Lincoln struck the shackles from the limbs of three million slaves, but we doubt seriously whether or not the Supreme Court has rendered any opinion that has within itself more of the substance of citizenship than the Monday decision.

"Many of the faults in American life can be corrected by the Negro himself if he has untrammelled use of the ballot. . . ." *Editorial, Oklahoma Black Dispatch, April 8, 1944.*

"The U.S. Supreme Court in its Texas Primary Decision last week struck a smashing blow for democracy. By this ruling the legal basis is established to allow Negroes a vote in Democratic party primaries in all southern states. . . . This decision is a milestone in the battle to fully integrate Negroes into the mainstream of American life. But we cannot expect its full effect to be immediately felt. The South is deeply steeped in its race hating philosophy. It will fight bitterly with every extra-legal or terroristic method it can evolve to thwart Negro voting. Yet the South fights at a disadvantage, for it fights without the law. And this inevitably makes it a losing struggle." —*Editorial, Chicago Defender, April 15.*

". . . In the Negro's struggle to attain full citizenship status in the United States, no sector of this battle is more important or has been so bitterly fought than his effort to obtain an unrestricted use of the ballot. There has been more persecution, suffering and bloodshed over this issue than any other phase of the Negro problem. It has been the basis for more court action and appeals to the United States Supreme Court than any

other issue. . . . The Negro's fight for the right to vote pre-dates the Emancipation Proclamation and it is one issue most intelligent Negroes have refused to compromise on. They recognize that the ballot in a democracy is a personal defense against official unfairness and injustice, and the strongest agency in effecting changes and progress. They know that the most important cause for the difference in the treatment of Negroes in the North and South is the protection the ballot gives to Northern Negroes, even though they don't use it wisely. The mere right to vote affords some protection. . . . Without the ballot, justice becomes a charity which can be given or withheld, and racial fair play a luxury which even the most liberal minded Southerners deem too costly. The shortest distance to our rights and privileges is through the polling booth, and racial conditions in the South will remain static so long as the aggrieved and oppressed are voteless.

"These considerations make the Texas White Primary decision . . . one of the most important in the Court's history. It was a great victory for liberalism and justice, but only the future can tell whether it brings nearer the day of unrestricted voting by Negroes in the South. . . . Negroes have won major victories from the courts before, pertaining to their right to vote, only to have their effect nullified by other frauds. In 1913 the restrictions which the South placed on Negro voters known as the 'Grandfather Clause' were declared illegal in the case of *Quinn vs. United States*. But the South substituted the poll tax, phony intelligence tests, and other deceptions to nullify the effect of the decision. . . .

"We are greatly encouraged . . . but we would be remiss if we failed to point out the magnitude of the struggle or encourage the fallacy that the fight for an un-

trammled ballot for Negroes of the South is nearly won. The goal is still a long way off, and many hard battles must yet be fought, but the reward which victory holds is worth it."—*Editorial, Pittsburgh Courier, April 15.*

". . . The Supreme Court's ruling of last week was momentous and can be made significant, but only if the people realize the fact that they have merely gained an advanced position and that the ultimate goal is still not achieved. . . . It was to be expected that the South would rebel against the decision. Even if it eventually—in more sober moments—resolves to abide by the ruling, the natural reaction of the South was to protest. Whether the rebellion succeeds or is overthrown will depend upon whether a way is found to split public opinion in the South and a sufficient number of men and women of influence there are found who are willing to unite on the side of those fighting for Democracy for all.

"The task of making the Supreme Court's edict fruitful must not be left to Negroes alone, whether in the South or the North. It can become effective only by the combined efforts of all Americans, black and white; for if it becomes a matter of black against white with no organized public opinion behind it, the hard won verdict of the Supreme Court will certainly be to no avail.

"The Court fulfilled its study when it handed down the decision, but the Court could not put into operation the machinery to make it work. That is yet to be done. The real job to win enfranchisement for the millions in the South has actually just begun. With such an auspicious start, it would be a tragedy for the campaign to peter short of overwhelming success."—*Editorial, New York Amsterdam News, April 15.*

• The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

THE PATTERN OF DEMOCRACY

CHICAGO. Dorsha B. Hayes. New York: Julian Messner. 317 pp. \$2.75

This is more than the saga of an American city, more than the story of American expansion reflected in the history of a Gargantuan town. It is a portrait in depth, showing behind the smoke and din of modernity the Indian village of "Shecaugo," playful water, passed by white men in the 1670s, scarce noted, and no more than a trading post in 1812—five houses and a fort—but in 1819 showing the pattern of democracy in its sparse population of classless frontiersmen. That pattern, as this gifted author is at pains to prove, persists through a period of suddenly accelerated growth unexampled in our history, as the town became the cross-roads of American enterprise and surged from its 8,000 at incorporation to more than a million in less than fifty years. By 1860 half its population was foreign-born. Chicago in that year made a man of the people its hero and saw to it that this homespun lawyer, "honest Abe," was nominated for President in the Republican convention meeting in their barn-like "Wigwam," the crude building shaken by their cheers. They had in them the best and the worst. From an awakening sense of the rights of men that came with westward expansion, stemmed their best impulses; from the undreamed of opportunities for profit from continental commerce, grew their money-lust. From haste to acquire wealth, and neglect to provide for social health, came exploitation of labor, slums, vice, and crime. We

have within the scope of this narrative all we struggle against and all we fight for. In matters of money-lust, crime, political corruption, and the like, Chicago has not been unique; rather she has been an exaggeration of existing trends. Dorsha Hayes writes: "Her faults and virtues are cut out of American cloth and shaped to American pattern." Done in vigorous, vivid prose, here is an absorbing, inspiring book.

But Democracy meets new challenges, and the pace in improvement has not been fast enough. Abroad, the pattern has been torn to shreds in more than one country; and here too the strain is telling. Some writers in the symposium on *Democracy: Should It Survive?* (Bruce. \$2) assure us that the mere patching of a rent here and there in the fabric will not save it—if into the great pattern we continue to weave such things as race hate and prejudice, contempt for human worth and the dignity of persons however underprivileged. Some see hope of a religious renewal which will "draw back to their vital sources all the persecuted, all the believers of the great Judeo-Christian family." Others see economic justice as the first step in repairing of a fabric patently weak along this line.

Norman Thomas notes in *What Is Our Destiny?* (Doubleday, Doran \$2) that there has been no ethical result from educational subservience to the sciences; that youth's notions of what liberty means remain unclear; that racism is rampant, Jim-Crow laws still in force. His latest and most forceful book re-examines the basic

principles of social democracy; outlines an economic system, neither Marxist nor fascist, that will give freedom to enterprise within a framework of social control.

Alfred M. Bingham's *The Practice of Idealism* (Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$2) stressing the practice, outlines a program for maintenance of full employment, indicates the line of progress in social equal-

ity, and foresees—partly as a result of economic security—the elimination of race hatred. Mr. Bingham reasons that current fear of government is “an anarchic fear, inherited from the frontiersman,” and is dissipated when we learn that liberty under law means also that governmental power is limited, accountable, predictable.

FOR A BETTER WORLD ORDER

Carl L. Becker brings an emeritus professor's calm mind and mature knowledge of history to bear on a theme that floods the new book lists. By his choice of a title, *How New Will the Better World Be?* (Knopf. \$2.50) he draws notice to the fact that profound changes in the polity of nations cannot come abruptly by agreement over a peace table, but must grow by historic processes under conditions made favorable for their growth. Among these is a raised standard of living—for all nations, not only for the victorious ones. That means co-operative international planning; regulation of investments in backward countries to curb exploitation there, and also—since those companies that plunder Asiatics generally practice similar exploitation at home—restraint for them as nationals.

Pitirim Sorokin's study of social and political relations between Russia and the United States (Dutton. \$3) supports Becker's contention as to processes involved in change. He shows that the groundwork for the new order in Russia was laid long before the violent period that accompanied the fall of the old. Stalin himself continues in power because he yields to forces inherent in the people themselves—including devotion to the nation, presumed earlier to have been

scrapped in favor of an international code. Sorokin defines the causes of peace (why do we speak only of the causes of war?): well-integrated basic values in a given society; and these values compatible with those of interacting nations. Reintegration of such values is the first condition of peace and of a new order. In promoting this, Russia and the United States may play a decisive part. For a well-documented account of the relations between these two nations, read *The Road to Teheran* by Foster Rhea Dulles (Princeton University Press. \$2.50). Find there evidence of a common cause bringing the two nations into comity for a century and a half, despite ideological differences. Personal relations have cemented a friendship which has endured through transient estrangements and today finds common basic objectives, among them doing away with want and injustice, and increasing human opportunity. Such is the road from Philadelphia, 1781, to Teheran, 1943.

The personal note is apparent in Harold Callender's *A Preface to Peace* (Knopf. \$3). For, besides a sound review of the causes of World War II and their correctives, we find an appraisal of the German character based on close familiarity with the people dating from the years before a friendly and responsive youth had

turned sullen and secretive under the influence of Nazi poison. He cites also certain obscurities in our understanding with Russia, urges us to look well into the

case of Britain, Russia, and the small nations, and prints three highly pertinent articles from the British press at the end of the volume.

FICTION FOR TODAY

Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit* (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$2.75) is top-ranking fiction. Dealing with a virulent and damning social issue of our time, it is not propaganda. Rather it is a strangely human and appealing story of erring folk, white and black, caught in the net of a psychosis that ruins their lives. The strands of this net, brain-spun and warped and twisted, they do not clearly see. It holds them none the less, and from its mesh that runs hidden through the social fabric—like the mycelium of a fungus—grow buds of hate that may swell and mushroom into acts of violence: strange fruit—but the poison is always there, and the potency.

We see Nonnie as she is—fragile, sensitive, fine of feeling, and not quite able to cope with realities, evil and sordid ones, wrong relations, hateful attitudes, not quite able to believe in them. Or, if they do exist, she will ignore them: think she has found a Galahad, a white one, who will protect her from any harm. And we see her as the folk who live in White Town see her: "That's Nonnie Anderson, that's one of the Anderson niggers. Been to college. Yeah! Whole family been to college. All right niggers though, even if they have. Had a good mother who raised her children to work hard and know their place." That sums it up for the white women of Maxwell, Georgia. A bit of praise for her competence as nurse, Nonnie can get, but nothing to contradict the overall verdict of the elite white.

We see the whites, too, as they are. The spotlight shifts from one to another

of them and there they are—not puppets jerked by strings, but real persons whose souls the author has seen through and whose minds she has read with clairvoyant power. No "mimetic" gift here; that of a medium, rather, to whom people's thoughts lie open. Hence the cogency of the dialogue throughout. Tracy Dean, the supposed Galahad, who has seduced Nonnie, is the natural product of an empty pietism (his mother's) and the pithless, pointless existence of his social set. Their preacher thinks God made the white race for a purpose, but does not know what that purpose is. Wanting information on that point, Maxwell's adult elite devote their time to business, to inept conversation and the proprieties, while youth finds consolation where it can.

A revival (old style) with all the emotional trimmings is staged to rouse the town from its lethargy. Young Dean is singled out for special pressure, yields, joins the church, and is pledged to a white girl. In so yielding he denies not only love but the truth as he has known it with Nonnie: that she is "a woman any man would love and be proud of"; accepts instead his white world's dictum that she, being colored, can be used at one's whim and discarded. Having gotten her pregnant, he offers her money to square the obligation. This denial of God's truth about a fine woman, and the cowardice of the man, of the set that rules him—this being untrue to himself and so false to every other man—is to this reviewer the high point of the story. The tragedy

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that follows is but the outer evidence of an inner decay that can rot the morals of a community. Even the free-thinking editor of the town's paper sells out to White Town's opinion as he glosses over the tragic events that follow; he knows the truth but dares not tell it—that White Town is afraid to be free.

The Outnumbered by Catherine Hutter (Dodd, Mead. \$2.75) is the story of simple people of an Austrian village and of those in social strata above them—patrons of a sanitarium near Vienna, of all nationalities—caught in the mesh of Nazi intrigue from the middle 1920s on. No writing could give us better understanding of the part played by individual persons, as such, in this tragic drama. But the tragic aspect is softened by a lingering narrative in slow tempo, letting the peace and charm of prewar Austria sink in; softened, too, by the character of Fehge, orphaned Jewish waif, than whom we have seen no finer fiction heroine, lifting the whole to a level above defeat and despair. Austrian-born, American now, former dancer (with Pavlova), then journalist, Catherine Hutter knows her backgrounds, writes with consummate skill a novel of distinction.

Latchstring Out by Skulda V. Baner (Houghton, Mifflin. \$2.75) is Sweden in America—in a mining town in upper Michigan—as seen with a child's fresh outlook. The characters are sharply drawn. Here is comedy, satire, candid comment from a child's frank tongue—all of it

flooded with the sunshine of an exuberant disposition.

The Dove Brings Peace is title and lead story in a group by Richard Hagopian (Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.50), revealing the true inwardness of Armenian character as seen in family and neighborhood life, and doing it better in some respects than Saroyan, for there is here more of ordinary human nature, less of extremes. Impulses are contained in the mold of an old culture, etiquette observed even in a quarrel, explosions of temper rare and followed by real contrition. From their parents—emigrés—the new generation learns the secret of enduring mischance, work, and suffering; learns, too, how to enjoy life's lesser amenities with a hearty good will. Illustrations by Manuel Tolegian, also of Armenian parentage, add a lively interest to the text.

The first of a set of Filipino village tales by Carlos Bulosan in *The Laughter of My Father* (Harcourt, Brace. \$2) is a fine piece of genre writing with the flavor of an Aesop or a La Fontaine. The title story (last in the set) was started while the author, jobless, waited for hours in a line wanting work at the canneries in 1939. "In November, 1942," he writes, "... I found the story in my hat. I sent it to *The New Yorker*, a magazine I had not read before, and in three weeks a letter came. 'Tell us some more about the Filipinos,' it said. I said, 'Yes, sir.'" And the tales followed. Picaresque for the most part, they certainly have the village flavor.

REGIONAL REFLECTIONS

Out of the Midwest, a collection of present-day writing edited by John T. Frederick (Whittlesey House. \$3.50), gives us the life and color of that region

in stories, memories, poems, aphorisms, reflections, as Midwesterners have known it since 1910. A collection rich in flavor, humor, and stout midwestern feeling.

We might infer from the title of Thomas D. Clark's *Pills, Petticoats and Plows* (Bobbs-Merrill. \$3.50) that the southern country store (subject of this study) was to be judged by the merchandise there displayed. Professor Clark (of the University of Kentucky) is not so superficial. He has used the store-order records as the basis for a study of people's tastes and needs. The store was a place where one came in touch with the world outside, saw and touched variety. The store-keeper was a semi-banker, a family adviser and confidant. Order-notes inevitably reveal much of psychology and southern community life.

"Cornerville" may technically not be a "region," but in William Foote Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (University of Chicago Press. \$3) we have an account of a district inhabited almost exclusively by Italian immigrants and their children, with regional ethics, activities, social distinctions, and rivalries that sociologist Whyte thought worth studying at first hand. He lived in the district (known as a problem area) for three and a half years. Gaining the confidence of the people, he joined in their activities, studied their personalities, attitudes, organizations, leaders. The notes on leadership are particularly good.

PERSONALITIES AND BACKGROUNDS

Outstanding current biography, Catherine Drinker Bowen's *A Yankee From Olympus* (Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$3) is more than a life of "Justice Holmes and His Family" (the sub-title). It is a portrait of one hundred and thirty-five years of New England seen through the personalities, doings, talk, activities of this group and their neighbors, starting with Abiel Holmes (the grandfather) dipping his quill to write the title page of *American Annals* in the year 1800. We can smile now at the fear and anger of Abiel's cronies when, in that year, Jefferson was elected President and policies were put in force that "might reduce the whole of respectable Boston to pauperism." Very droll seems the rage of the Congressman from Massachusetts a few years later when the admission of Louisiana, and then Alabama, to the Union gave a "mixed race of Anglo-Hispano-Gallo-Americans who bask on the sands of the Mississippi" a voice in our government. Readers will be eager to know how the humor-loving Oliver Wendell Holmes—his arrival briefly not-

ed in Abiel's diary in 1809, "Son, b."—sprouted from that serious-minded Calvinistic stock; and how his son (heralded as "a Second Edition of O. W. H.") got on so poorly with a parent who could joke over a cadaver in the lecture room where he presided. The human interest is absorbing all through, and the humor delicious; but the book's chief claim for distinction is that it interprets the mind of a great American and richly illumines the age in which he lived.

Edwin R. Embree's brief biographies of American Negro leaders and notables in *13 Against the Odds* (Viking. \$2.75) are, taken singly, striking studies of character and achievement. Taken as a whole, their effect is spectacular in many ways. These lives reflect the achievement of a great race moving in eighty years from slavery to the front rank in the fine arts, education, civic leadership, and literature. Even more striking is the fact that while these are all "success stories" in the American tradition, not one is a saga of business success. Money was not a goal.

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Neither was fame: that came to them unsought. These persons, chosen by a panel of two hundred people, colored and white, stand as leaders in a struggle wide as the world; not for their race only but, as one of them (Richard Wright) puts it, "something deeper than politics or race . . . a human right, the right of a man to think and feel honestly." Here is source material for better, clearer perceptions of the truth about life and race—one race, and that the human. "I am describing not gods but interesting and very human people," writes Mr. Embree. That is why his account convinces as well as inspires.

Most human of them all—or should we say most god-like—was George Washing-

ton Carver, whose newest biography by Shirley Graham and George D. Lipscom (Julian Messner. \$2.50) is titled *Dr. George Washington Carver, Scientist*. He was all of that. But achievements in pure science alone do not generate universal love and reverence such as Dr. Carver enjoyed. For the secret of the hold he has on men's affections, read the story of a frail child born in slavery, orphaned, seeking beauty from the first, winning people, unfolding that big bud of his versatile mind till it ranked among the great ones—but wearing the invisible cloak of humility all the time. Designed for younger readers, this account holds also much for adults.

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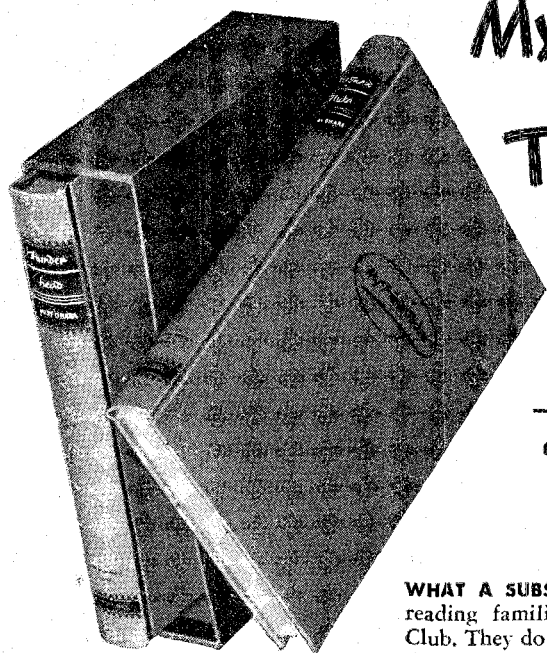
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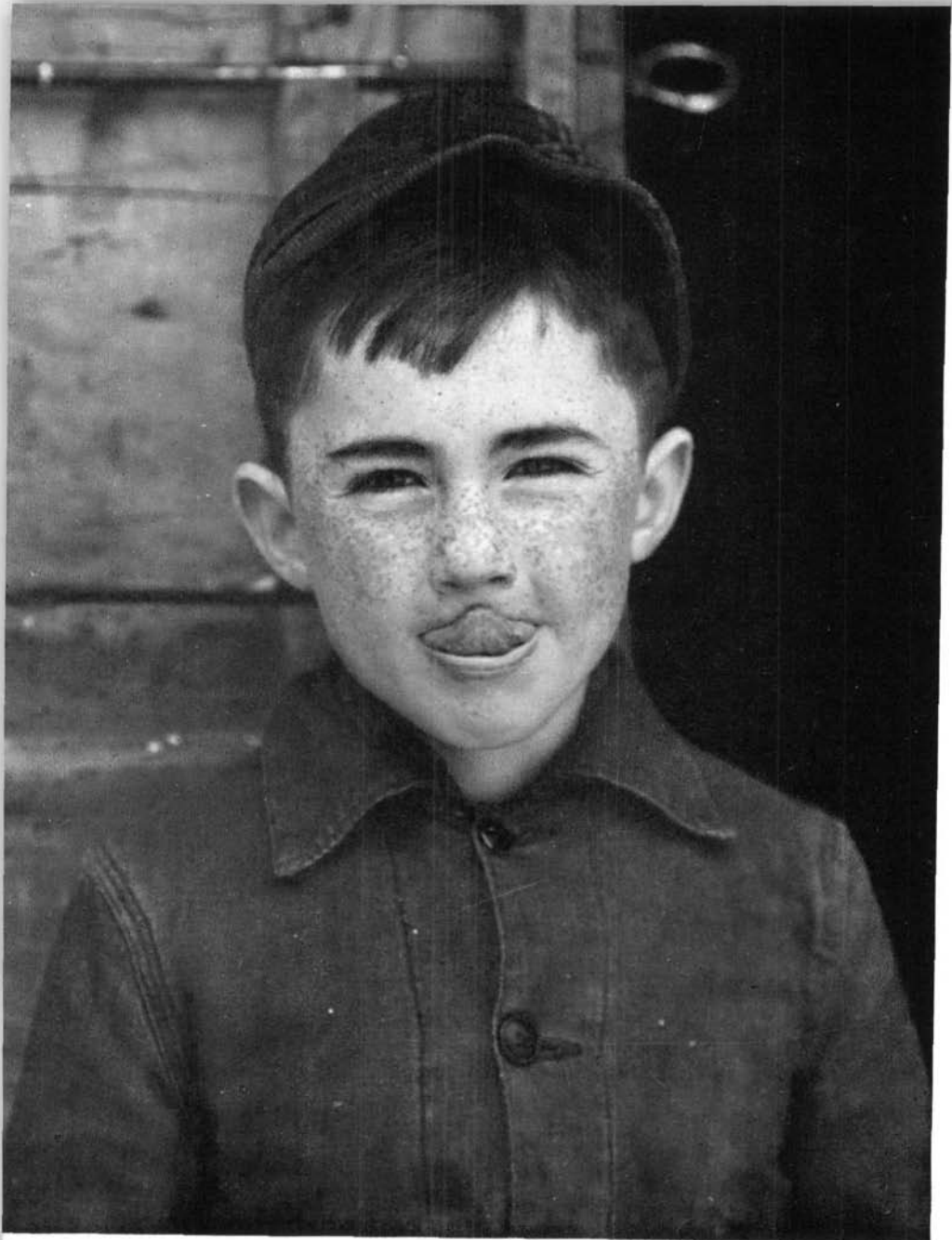
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